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THE
HISTORY
OF
ELSMERE AND ROSA:

AN
EPISODE
IN TWO VOLUMES.

THE MERRY MATTER WRITTEN BY JOHN MATHERS:
THE GRAVE, BY A SOLID GENTLEMAN.

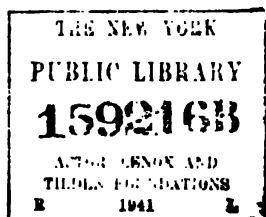
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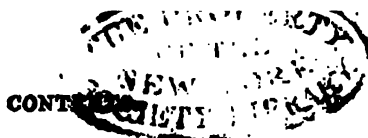
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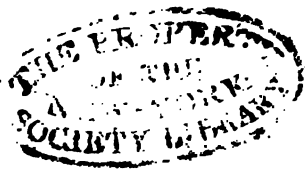
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ELSMERE AND ROSA.

CHAP. I.

Some Account of Mr. Elsmere, and of what had passed between him and Rosa before she came to visit her Parents.

IT is now time, courteous reader, to introduce Mr. Elsmere to your notice; whose name has been seen only in our title-page; a young man of a very odd turn, of whom we now proceed to give you some account. Elsmere was born in Scotland, the son of Scottish parents, and educated at the University of Edinburgh: his father and mother died before he came of age, and left him all they were worth in the world: he was an only child, and always very greatly beloved by his parents, his schoolmaster, and his

tutors. Now schoolmasters and tutors are sometimes known to differ in opinion from fathers and mothers, in regard to only sons especially, who often get floggings at school and sugar-plums at home, until the bitterness of one and the sweetness of the other, mixing in their stomachs, make them exceedingly sick : that was not the case with the hero of this our History. He was a lad of a grave turn, and so fond of the rod that one morning, at half an hour past seven o'clock, he was seen by his master to take it up with a smile, put it to his lips, and kiss it : an odd thing this for a school-boy to do, who usually turn their tails to the rod, and get out of the way of it as soon as they can. Well, tastes differ, and constitutions too ; what is one man's meat is another man's poison : Elsmere loved his book as well as the rod ; so he, the book, and the rod, were always very good friends.

When he went to the University he kept all his learning on his stomach :

some get sick of it at school, and the first thing they do, when they come to the University, is to throw it all up, and clear their insides of it: Elsmere had a good appetite, and a good digestion withal; and, when he came to the University, instead of bringing a weak stomach, they found him as ravenous as a wolf. But one evil that comes with a voracious appetite is this; hungry folks will eat any thing, wholesome or unwholesome: Elsmere did the like, and fell to strange diet, which, though it did not poison him outright, made a strange fellow of him: he got hold of some very religious books, which teach a man how to make an angel of himself before his time. Now Elsmere set about to make an angel of himself with all diligence: he had not worked long, however, before he found the making of angels no very easy trade; but the difficulty wore spurs, and, instead of stopping him on the road, as some spurs do, pricked him on at a good round trot. Now it came to pass that

Elsmere, a willing horse, after trotting on a good way, got knocked up, and was fain to come to a foot's pace ; he kept on, however, well knowing that, if he could but set one leg before the other, be his pace never so slow, it would bring him to his journey's end at last : our young hero had a long way to go, and many lets and impediments to meet withal, but more of this presently. When a man is put to hard labour it is apt to make him look a little grave ; Elsmere, though he was never known to laugh much, was now seldom seen to smile : his fellow-students said, amongst themselves, that he had seen a ghost, and his tutor at the University thought he was going mad.

Reader, perhaps you have heard of a thing called conscience ? Elsmere had a thing of this sort, and it was so troublesome to him that he could not rest night or day for it : it pricked him so much in his inside that, one day, he was in doubt if he had not swallowed a great hedge-

hog! Amongst other apparel, he had a new pair of satin breeches, which he put on on Sundays, and went to church in them: coming out of church one Sunday, he saw a poor man a begging at the door, with scarce any breeches on at all! He pitied the poor man, and felt a keen desire to help him; so far all was right: so, commanding the man to follow him to his rooms, he pulled off his new satin breeches, gave them to the poor man, who was afraid to wear them for fear of being taken up on suspicion of having stolen them, and Elsmere took the poor man's ragged breeches in-exchange. As soon as the poor man was gone, who wrapped himself up as well as he could in his coat, and walked off without any breeches—as soon as the mendicant was gone, Elsmere hung the poor man's ragged breeches upon a nail in his room, and spake to them as follows: viz. “The world in which we live is a very wicked world, of which this poor man's ragged breeches are a sad proof; how often have I seen

poor men in ragged breeches, before this day, and gave them no help ; to punish myself for which neglect, I am now determined to wear this poor man's ragged breeches myself for a week !” Saying which, Elsmere, who had stood some time without any breeches at all, forthwith slipped into the ragged breeches himself, and went to the evening service in them. Now it came to pass that a flurry of wind caught his upper garments at the church door, and exposed his ragged breeches to twenty people. One of the twenty happened to be his tutor, who looked at his pupil's breeches ; but, seeing him wrap himself in his gown, after the accident, in such a manner as no offence might come in the church, he took no further notice till after the service, when, touching him on the shoulder, he begged to speak a few words to him in private.

Elsmere followed his tutor to his apartments, who, shutting the door, spoke to him as follows : “ Pray, Mr. Elsmere,”

says he, putting his gown a little on one side, "pray, Mr. Elsmere, are these the best breeches you have to come to church in on a Sunday?" Elsmere at first stood silent; but, upon being a good deal pressed by his tutor, he burst into a flood of tears, and told him, very fairly, the whole story. His tutor, though a grave man, could hardly forbear a smile: recovering his countenance, however, he read him a long lecture, the sum and substance of which was, that charity was certainly a very good thing, but that it was a very wicked one to make charity ridiculous. Elsmere was sufficiently convinced, by his tutor's arguments, to return to his own rooms and pull off his ragged breeches; and glad enough he was to get rid of them, for some reasons which must be left to the ingenuity of the reader.

Elsmere was eighteen years of age when he bestowed his charity upon the poor man at the church door. Now, reader, you must understand, if you have

not understood it already, that Elsmere was a man of a dark and gloomy mind, who had fallen amongst religious books, of a severe proscriptive cast, that forbid a man, under the greatest pains and penalties, to eat an egg under any rules but their own ; books that make morality ridiculous, and turn religion into a fury : Elsmere had fallen amongst these writers, like a man among thieves ; and, though they had not stripped him of all, had succeeded so far as to rob him of a great deal of his reason. He left his tutor's apartments with a very grave face ; and, though he was convinced that what his tutor had said to him had a great deal of good sense in it, he came to a mind, at last, that his tutor was a man of loose principles ; and, though he might be a very good sort of person, in the wordly eye, he was not quite an angel in his own. Amongst other signs of his reason not being always at home, Elsmere would talk to himself an hour together, and that, too, as loud as if he were speak-

ing to one that was very deaf. Coming from his tutor's rooms, he walked up into a corner, where two high walls met; and, standing as close as he could in the angle, with his face towards the masonry, he began to talk in a loud voice, as it were to one shut up in the building. "This world," said he, "is a very wicked place, and all the men and women in it very wicked! Human nature is not what it was in old time, when St. Ignatius, Hermes Pastor, Clemens Romanus, and St. Polycarp, flourished; when St. Chrysostom read his lectures, and Tertullian rose like a storm upon the earth! In those days, religion stood upon the very lip of hell; and, as often as the devil made an attempt to come up, like an eructation from below, pushed the evil spirit back again, down its throat." Some of his fellow students stealing up behind him, and overhearing Elsmere's harangue, which a man might have done without being at the pains to come very near, burst into a laugh, as

loud as the neighing of a horse: and one, either more intimate with him, or more saucy than the rest, pulled his gown aside, to look at his breeches, which his tutor's arguments, and the furious attacks of certain animacula on his skin, had now brought him to a mind to change; but his mind was, as yet, only changed, and not his breeches.

"Why, Elsmere," said one, who recovered from a fit of laughter sooner than the rest, "where the devil did you get these breeches?" Elsmere said, it was no matter; he had put them on for reasons too sublime for them to guess, who were too much of a piece with the earth on which they trod, to hear, much more to understand, his motives. One said, he did not see much sublimity in ragged breeches; when Elsmere walked off, and, locking himself into his rooms, fell into a muse: well, reader, and there we will e'en leave him, for what can we do with him? and in the mean time, let you a little further into his character.

Follow us, then, reader, and you shall see what you shall see. If we look at Elsmere in a moral and religious light, we shall find him to be a young man of no common excellence; but his fault was this: he carried matters a little too far, and, with the best intentions in the world, made both religion and morality ridiculous: now to clothe the naked, and mortify one's own pride, are certainly very meritorious acts and deeds; but to exchange breeches with a ragamuffin, and wear them after we have so done, has something so odd in it, that if we do such things we must expect to get laughed at for our pains. Elsmere was one of the best young men in the University to which he belonged, and one of the best scholars in it: divinity was his favourite study, and his knowledge of the Greek and Latin tongues, having access to the public libraries, soon brought him acquainted with the schoolmen and the fathers of the church: The doctrines of Plato laid a foundation for

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an odd sort of a structure in his mind, which those Gothic architects, the schoolmen and the fathers of the church, finished after their most whimsical manner of building ; but when all was done, reason and religion had a hard matter to know how to live in such a curious habitation without breaking their heads, their shins, or their elbows ! There was a wall in one place where they expected to find a door ; and when they did find a door, Reason might push on one side, and Religion pull on the other, and find after all, that it was either not made to be opened, or stuck so fast in the posts that nothing short of a miracle could find any passage. In a great many rooms there were no windows at all, and in others one could not see for light ; where a candle was wanted, there was no such thing ; and where there was nothing to stumble over, there were as many lamps hung about as at an illumination. In one fire place you might see a fire big enough to roast an ox, in another, a little

brush-wood that made a monstrous blaze for a short time, and then went out. In some places the floors were so uneven that one was afraid to take a step, and none could take two without coming neck and heels to the ground; in others, all seemed fair and even, but the pavement was as slippery as ice, and as brittle too, for it would break and let one through in a moment. In many places there were stumbling-blocks laid on purpose for folks to break their shins over; and if any one attempted to go up stairs, it was ten thousand to one he fell slap into a great hole dug under the foundation. Some parts of the house looked as if they had been some time or other turned upside down; and, although marks of an able hand were visible in putting some members of the building in their places again, many gaps, and rents, and schisms, were apparent in the walls, which seemed to be of no use but to let the wind in. But we must hold our hand, for if we undertook to describe the

furniture, the meats, and drinks, the inhabitants, and the goods and chattels, which this strange mansion contained, the thing would take up as many pages as there are in "St. Thomas Aquinas," or "Bellarmine's Controversies."

This, and the reader's patience, being duly considered, we must only touch a few heads, and have done. The rooms where the people kept their clothes were filled with great heaps of the oddest garments a man ever saw; some were as ragged as the beggar's breeches above mentioned; others plastered with gold, and stuck full of diamonds; and some so curiously constructed, that when a man got his body and limbs once fairly into them, he never could find his way out again. Some were made of silk and some of the finest linen; some of sack-ing and the coarsest hair-cloth: these latter were intended for shirts and shifts, and whoever put them on, lived as it were in the midst of a great brush. To speak fairly, however, some dresses were

neat and decent ; but many were such odd pieces of apparel, that a man could scarcely look at them without astonishment or laughter. We could say a great deal upon the meats and drinks ; but for some reason, we shall not touch upon what was contained either in the larder, the kitchen, or the cellar: there was one odd kind of dish, however, that upon a word's speaking was turned out of one thing into another, though to a man who had eyes good enough to see a church-steeple by day-light, it did not seem to be a bit altered. But of all the noises ever heard in one house, the tower of Babel hardly excepted, none, perhaps, ever came in competition with the loudness, the variety, the oddity, and the discord of what were heard in this place! And, as for the people in it, they were all together by the ears, tearing one another's clothes off their backs, quarrelling, pulling one another's hair, spitting in one another's faces, kicking one another's wigs about, buffeting, and

scratching one another's eyes out of their heads!—Yet, amongst the number, there was here and there a man of good sense, who got his friends together, and enjoyed a little quiet talk in a corner.

Surely this was a great deal for one man to have in his head; it were enough to turn his brains! It did turn Elsmere's brains half over, but could not get them any further. Now to be half mad is something, though not so good as to be stark mad; for then, one has an excuse for any thing, which is very hard upon a gentleman in his senses, who cannot do so much as beat another's brains out without being called to an account for it. Elsmere's madness, however, did not lie this way; all his violence was directed against himself, whom he took to be one of the most wicked beings incarnate. So he and the flesh fell fearfully at odds, and he took every opportunity to do it all the despite he could. Some folks get tired of old things, as he did of his old breeches; so

when he came home he put them aside, and took a step into something better: he turned his tutor's arguments in his head, and discovered something too carnal in them, something too loose, and concluded, as some wise folks have done before him, that he was the only man that was right at last. In regard to being laughed at, he held it to be an honour, and one of the very best proofs that were to be had, that he had done his duty.

After all, poor Elsmere's meaning was good, though the effects of it lay a little out of the common road. "The poor man," said Elsmere, looking at the ragged breeches that lay before him on the floor, "whom I found begging at the church gate, was of course a better man than myself; and, if better, more worthy; and, if more worthy, a man of greater merit, and therefore ought to be better clothed than I. In the first place, he had less pride than I; for he could wear these ragged breeches without being at all ashamed to be seen in

them; but the moment I put them on, my pride was hurt, and I felt what I deserved, great mortification in them. This is a proof that they were of use to me: there is no doubt of this matter, for I felt it in myself. My tutor may argue as he will, and the world laugh as it pleases; I know that I am got into the right way, and will do my best to keep it: digress from it I must, at times, through the frailties of the body; but, as often as I do, fastings, and prayers, and mortifications, will soon bring me back again.

To put all this in practice, when he was invited to dine with a friend, and felt himself very hungry, which he almost always was, for he grudged himself a bit of good meat, not out of avarice, for that he held to be a deadly sin, but in order to beat down the flesh and Satan—when he was bidden to dine with a friend, and felt a good appetite, though he sat down to the best, he would eat nothing but a crust of bread, and drink

nothing but cold water in the midst of the choicest meats and wines. Elsmere was a young man of very uncommon beauty, which his temperance, soberness, and chastity, kept in the fullest bloom; the ladies love pretty things, and they loved to look at the pretty Elsmere; and they would, sometimes, forward jades! more shame for them! and they would at times edge in a word upon him, who, being a man of warm passions, made it a rule, if a pretty young woman sat on one side of him, always to look on the other, or dip his eyes in the ugly face of some old withered virgin, of such hideous aspect, that no horse could meet her in the highway without snorting at her; no dog stay in the same room with her without howling, or making a dash to run up the chimney. Of all the temptations, Elsmere dreaded a pretty woman the most, and he actually one day came to a pause if he should look for means to put his eyes out! He went so far as to bargain with a poor boy to read to him,

for he could not part with his darling authors, and also to lead him about when he came to be blind ; and what would have become of two of the finest eyes in the world we tremble to say, if old Bunyan had not spurred him up to go forth and fight, which he could not do unless he saw his enemy. So the very next time he met a pretty girl, he, like a hero, stared her full in the face ; and he got a pennyworth for his penny, for that pretty girl was the charming Rosa.

Turn short at this corner, reader, and we will bring you round again into the road in a few minutes. Elsmere's tutor, whose name was Dr. Grove, was a distant relation of Lady Alicia Grove, Rosa's aunt : He had a house in Edinburgh, where he enjoyed the society of his friends when University business was done : now it came to pass, that Lady Alicia and Rosa were invited to come and see the Doctor and his wife : Elsmere, with all his oddities, was a very great favourite with the Doctor, who,

seeing him likely to take a comical turn, would often invite him to his house, and give him good advice upon many matters. It came to pass, likewise, that Elsmere was bidden to dine with his tutor, one day, when Lady Alicia and Rosa were staying in the good Doctor's house. Elsmere, punctual in all things, came early, that he might be in good time for the dinner. Women, and the dangers that surrounded them, happened at this time to occupy much of Elsmere's attention; he was reading to his case, tumbling over the fathers of the church, and the monkish writers, for armour and for weapons against the day of battle; he heard that the Doctor had a terrible beauty in his house; so he was in some measure prepared for the foe.

Elsmere had all his armour upon his body, and his shield in his hand, when Rosa, who happened to be the first lady dressed, came into the room. Rosa was in no humour to fight, though her fine eyes encountered a pair of as fine ones

in Elsmere's face as her own. The contest soon began, which should dart the brightest rays into their opponent's beamy spheres, and glance for glance was exchanged, each contending for the victory: a sweet smile and a graceful curtsy from Rosa won the day, and Elsmere's eyes were beaten to the ground!—and it would have been well if no greater mischief had been done. What sort of a breast-plate Elsmere had put on that day, or what materials his shield was made of, we will not say: good or bad, however, steel, iron, gold, or brass, a dart shot from Rosa's pretty lips, when she gave Elsmere her smile, pervaded all, and flew directly into Elsmere's heart!—But Rosa had no great things to boast of on her side of the question; for the blush, and the downcast eyes, when Elsmere received his wound, avenged it well, and Rosa felt something pierce her left side, in a moment, just as if a great pin had pricked it. When folks get such sharp things as spears and

arrows stuck into them, they are apt to wince a little. Rosa gave signs enough she had got a hurt, but Elsmere saw it not; and the best reason we can give you, reader, is, because he did not look: if he had, and followed Rosa up with a smile, and showed his beautiful teeth, she would have fallen dead, at her full length, on the carpet. Reader, you well know what a chatterbox Rosa is of old; she felt and dreaded Elsmere's power over her in a moment, and, moving to a window near which Elsmere stood, with that ease and elegance which fine masters give, "Pray, Sir," said she, turning her fine bosom full upon him, which set fire to Elsmere's breast, and burned all the fathers of the church in his heart to ashes—"Pray, Sir," said she, with one of her most lovely smiles—O sure no smile e'er equalled Rosa's smile!—"Sir," said she, "by your dress you seem to be a student here; what number have you in this fine University, and to what arts are students bred in it?"

This broke the silence, which makes a lady and gentleman look silly if it hold too long between them ; but Rosa's ease and manners chased it hence ; and although it be pain and grief to the ladies to talk, she asked Elsmere, whose eyes were still cast down as if to show his fine long eye-lashes, that made Rosa's heart smart like a whip, she asked Elsmere half a dozen questions before she could get so much as one answer from him, poor fellow ! and that was broken into two or three different pieces, like a brittle thing that falls from a trembling hand and gets shattered.

It was not long before Rosa found out that Elsmere was almost frightened out of his wits : she put it to the score of living shut up within the walls of a college, and could have found in her heart to have offered him her salts. Now to see so much modesty in a young man, and one so handsome too, had as much wonder as it had charms for Rosa, who had been some time used to the impudent

young rascals about town, that could scarce be kept at a distance with a pitchfork. She looked at the beautiful Elsmere with a sigh ; and here it was where Rosa first knew love. She thought him very stupid though not to talk more, and threw her fan down on purpose to try if he knew how to pick one up, and put it in its proper place—Elsmere looked at it as it lay at his feet, but whether he thought it would burn his fingers if he touched it, or might bite him if he meddled with it, we can't say ; but he let it lie, until Rosa stretched out her hand to show Elsmere what a pretty round arm she had, and made a little stoop as if she would pick it up herself. Elsmere then, after two attempts, got hold of it, and ventured—how dared he do such a thing?—ventured to look in Rosa's face, when he gave it her. Rosa did not miss the opportunity—she would have been much to blame if she had—she did not miss the opportunity to dart another of her very best smiles into

Elsmere's delightful brown eyes, when she received it.

Now, pretty reader, there was quite as much harm done on one side as the other, and there was not a bit of love, as big as the smallest pin's point in the world, lost between Elsmere and his Rosa. Lady Alicia, Mrs. Grove, and the Doctor, coming into the room at this time, gave Rosa an opportunity of running up stairs to her apartment, and she gave ease to her heart by a flood of tears. "What!" said she to herself, with a sob and a sigh mixed together, "have I gazed without danger, and conversed without the least harm, with the handsomest and most engaging of the young men in the gay world, and come to lose my heart in the cold cloisters of an University? But I know my heart well enough to be assured, that the wound it has this day received is an incurable one; this young student, whose name I do not as yet know, must be mine, or I will be no man's." Tears flowed apace

here, and stopped poor Rosa's soliloquy. But the noise of the servants serving the dinner now interrupted her, and a sweet savour from the Doctor's dining room—the Doctor loved roast beef and plum pudding—a sweet savour from Dr. Grove's dining room, put Rosa in mind of what people of taste are fond of. She ran to her basin and washed her eyes, and made the best of her way into the dining-room, where she found all the company in their chairs; and there being only one vacant, and that next Mr. Elsmere, she was forced to take that, you know, pretty reader, or stand all dinner time.

Truly sensible, now, of the dreadful wound she had got in her poor aching heart, she felt all the spite and malice in the world to be thoroughly revenged on Elsmere for what he had done, without bearing any malice on his part, or even so much as knowing that he had transfixed the charming bosom of the beauty who sat next him, and warmed that side of him just as if he sat close by a great kitchen fire!

CHAP. II.

Further Particulars of the Loves of Elsmere and Rosa : Dr. and Mrs. Grove visit Lady Alicia, at Spade-oak : Elsmere accepts an Invitation to be of the Party.

ROSA, bred in the great world, knew, to a pin's breadth, how far she could go with a young gentleman without breaking any statute, or transgressing any prescribed law. She made the best of her time and place, at dinner, to get Elsmere into a talk with her, who forgot all about his bread and water, and received upon his plate whatever she offered to put upon it ; and, to give her her due, she was very attentive to the young gentleman's wants, and would have put herself upon his plate if she had had any idea that he wanted to eat her. But, as it happened, Elsmere did not take Rosa upon his fork at this time. Rosa looked at his mouth, nevertheless, as if she

would have been glad to have gone down the red lane. It is wonderful, when a young gentleman and lady sit next each other, and would eat one another if they could, how they get tattling together! As for Rosa, there never was such a chatter-pie in the world: she asked Elsmere so many questions, and tried so many subjects, that she made him talk whether he would or not, till, at last, his face got so flushed, and he looked so amazingly handsome, that Rosa was almost afraid to look in it. The cunning baggage had a thousand arts and wiles to find out people's turns, likings, tastes, and habits; and, catching a hint, she said she liked Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* so well, that she had read it twice over: she soon saw Elsmere was touched to the soul with this, and she poured in her praises upon "the *Whole Duty of Man*," which happened to be one of his most favourite works. "Mr. Elsmere," said she, it was not long before she picked up his charming name.

"Mr. Elsmere," said she, "that divine work," meaning the *Whole duty of Man*, "is but ill suited to the vitiated taste of this world; its rules are too severe for people now; its sentiments too fine and too sublime for the coarse taste of this our grosser age." Poor Elsmere! this, and a good deal more of the like, which Rosa, finding his relish for it, poured in upon him with an unceasing tongue, charmed the young gentleman out of his senses: but it was very dangerous work.

Rosa set her neighbour's house on fire without thinking of the mischief that was coming to her own: she saw matters kindle as she would have them, for Elsmere was a stranger to disguise: but she felt the insinuating fire kindle in her own bosom at the same time. All she had now to do was not to let him know his power over her; and this, in order to make a sure game of him. Elsmere, however, was a sharp fellow, and saw that she was fond of him, in spite of her arts.

Rosa now began to open her plan of works : she found that she must not expect to see him every day at the Doctor's, who did not read his lectures to his pupils at his house, and was willing to tie a little string to Elsmere, that she might give him a small pull now and then. " Mr. Elsmere," said she, " Dr. Grove tells me that you are one of the best scholars in the University : now, I have a little favour to beg of you ; I heard you, after dinner, very much commend some of St. Chrysostom's Homilies ; would you favour me so far as to translate one or two for me, while my aunt and I stay here ? " " I hope you are not going away yet," said Elsmere, with a look which Rosa did not want him to translate the meaning of, for she could construe it very well herself. " O no," said Rosa, " my aunt will stay a fortnight here ; but I expect some friends will come and fetch me away in a few days." Now this was false ; but the reader will see the cunning in it. " Very

well," said he, though it was not very well all the while; "then I will set about my translation this evening."

This talk befell after the tea and coffee were removed; and Rosa was sadly afraid he should take his departure immediately; not so, for love and Rosa tied him into his chair; and, if he had gone at that moment, he must have gone away chair and all! and who knows the power of love, whether instances may not occur of its making a man and his chair, in some cases, one flesh? And a better match, after all, than some that are made at the altar; for many a man would pass his days more at his ease, in the arms of a chair, with a soft cushion in it, than in the arms of many a woman that has nothing like a soft cushion about her. The time now came for the company, at the Doctor's house, to break up; and that breaking-up was almost heart-breaking between Elsmere and Rosa, who were engaged in a delightful talk about the fathers of the church. Rosa (how

could she be so silly ?) could not keep the water out of her eyes, for her heart, when Elsmere made his bow at parting. She now made her curtsey, and retired to her room, to meditate by herself upon the occurrences of this day. Elsmere, too, had matter for meditation ; but we must now have done with them for the present.

The manner in which Rosa and Elsmere had engaged one another's attention did not escape Lady Alicia or Dr. Grove, who were now left at one another's mercy, Mrs. Grove having attended Rosa to her apartment, to see if all matters were put in their right places. Lady Alicia—how the ladies do talk !—Lady Alicia, casting her eyes on the Rev. Doctor, spoke as follows : “ Pray, cousin, who is the young student that dined at your table to-day ? ” “ He is the only child of an old school-fellow of mine,” said the Doctor, “ who is now in his grave, a worthy good man as ever lived ; he had the misfortune to lose his wife, and

died of a broken heart within the year after her decease. I was made his executor; my friend, except a few legacies, left all his property to his son, Thomas Augustus, who will come into an estate of two thousand pounds a year next May, when he will be of age. He is a very excellent young man, and one of the best scholars in the University; but, as the fairest fruits will have their specks, and the best roses get the deepest cankers, religion, a strange fault in a young man, is come to be a disease in him; and it has already run him into some extravagances, which certainly show, I am sorry to say, considerable disorder of the mind. I will tell you a little story of him." (Here the Doctor told Lady Alicia the story of the beggar whom he met at the church gate.) "I have an idea," said Lady Alicia, "that, as soon as he has finished his University business, a wife would be of some service to him; what d'ye think of my pretty niece? I don't imagine there would be

any objection, on the part of her friends, to a match between them ; and, between you and me, cousin, from what we observed to-day, I don't think they hate one another very heartily." " In regard to his business in the University," said the Doctor, " he has finished that, and with a great deal of credit to himself ; but he prefers college to any other place, having the run of the best libraries, and reading is his chief delight." " I love my niece," said Lady Alicia, " better, perhaps, than I should have done any daughter of my own ; her father and mother are poor, they can give her nothing ; but, what follows must be a profound secret between you and me, cousin : it is this ; if Mr. Elsmere should make his addresses, I will allow my niece a thousand a year as long as I live, and shall not forget her in my will. She has had no less than five offers already three of which came, I assure you, from young noblemen ; but she will not have any thing to do with people of fashion, she says ; and, although

not naturally fond of retirement, their manners and way of life are what she dislikes. Our neighbour, in Cumberland, Mr. Bartholomew Decastro, whom you know very well, has set her very much against the world, by a sermon which he preached one Sunday when we were at Oaken Grove chapel. She still retains a taste for the gaieties of the town, however, and never seems to have any objection to going with me to London, when the season commences: but she has got a copy of this sermon, and carries it with her wherever she goes. There is not a man in the world of whom I have a higher opinion; but, in regard to religious matters, Mr. Bartholomew is a great deal too severe for me: I intend to make him my executor, however, cousin, since you, and our good relation of Hindermark, have refused to act."

"I am too much in the wane of life for such exertions now," said the Doctor, "or I would have undertaken the management of your matters with much

good will, if you should be called before me out of this life : my friend Elsmere's business laid me down in the gout for two months : I must leave these matters now to younger and stronger men." " But, my dear cousin," said Lady Alicia, " let us think of the thing I mentioned ; Elsmere and Rosa would make a very pretty couple ; their children must be beautiful ! "

" Hah-hah," said the Doctor, rubbing one of his shins, " I could crack my joke upon these things once. My good old friend left his boy under my care—I will think about the thing—but I must see more of the young lady—this story of the sermon sounds well." " I know you always act with prudence, cousin—you shall see more of her : the vacation is at hand—come, and bring Mrs. Grove and young Elsmere with you, and spend it at Spade-oak." " Well," said the old gentleman, " I will have some talk with my wife and the gout about it. I have not been in your parts now these two years ;

hey will think I have bidden adieu to Hindermark. I have not missed a year there for these thirty years before.” “You must come and see your young cousins in Dairy Mead,” said her Ladyship: I found two weddings * had taken place in the neighbourhood of Oaken Grove, when my niece and I returned from the continent.” “Well, I will see what I can do,” said the Doctor, “but when this wild beast, the gout, makes his den in a man’s constitution, the owner and occupier of the house must come to an agreement before they can move the building, cousin Alicia.”

“I am quite in love with Elsmere,” said her Ladyship, “if I was a young woman, I would burn half a dozen caps until I could find one to his liking.” “Well,” said the Doctor, “I will sound Augustus upon matrimony the first opportunity: a sprightly wife may dispel this religious gloom that darkens his mind;

* Genevieve’s and Julia’s.

I gave him a great deal of advice upon it, the other day. I took much pains to point out his error, and told him that he had quite mistaken the matter, that religion made people cheerful, and not melancholy. He turned this upon me in a way I did not expect; and for which, indeed, I was not prepared; that was the very thing, he said, which gave him uneasiness; it made the good cheerful, but the bad melancholy. He said he was made by nature worse than others, called himself a vessel of wrath; said he was willing to make himself good, but that he had no good materials in him to work upon; he had searched narrowly, and could find none. He had got a notion that some were made on purpose to be condemned, that the attributes of the Deity must all have their objects, and matter for exercise; that anger was one, and that such as he were created on purpose to be matter for it to work upon. He talked a great deal about the extent of mercy, that grace had its vessels made

on purpose to receive it; he was not made to hold it, as some vessels, baskets, for instance, were not made to hold water: that the virtues had their soils, like seeds; would grow in some, but not in others; that he was made of the wrong sort of mould for them. He scarce thought it possible that he could be made an angel. He had tried some receipts laid down, in good and pious books, to make an angel; he had tried to make himself one, but had failed, and was cast into despair. He was told by pious writers that the passions could be rooted out; and, unless they were, no man could be made blessed: he had tried to root out his own, but found their roots were so large and so strong that he could not pull them up; and, when he thought he had pulled one out, he, in a very short time, found, to his no small mortification, that he had only broke the root in the ground, and that made matters a great deal worse, for it sprung up with more vigour than ever. But

he had not done with himself, he said, and had great hopes and expectations in fastings and prayers. Thus the poor young man ran on weeping, at times, as if his heart was breaking! I gave him all the comfort I could, told him he was in many errors, guarded him against a certain set of writers, who certainly mean well, but do a great deal of mischief; who cast people into despair by making difficulties which exist nowhere but in their own cloudy imaginations; and, while some of them make possibilities impossible, others do their part in the business, and make impossibilities possible. If the principles laid down by some of these writers were practical, a man might be made a perfect thing in this world; but I told him if he fell into despair, because he could not work an impossibility, he must have given up his understanding to such as would fain persuade him that he could. I concluded my advice by telling him to go and read the Bible with patience and at-

tention; for if he had a mind to taste pure waters, the best way would be for him to go to the fountain's head."

When the good Doctor came to the word "head," his clock struck twelve: upon which, Lady Alicia made her curtsy, and the worthy Doctor his bow; and they retired to their apartments to repair the wear and tear of the day. Now, reader, we could say a great many pretty things upon sleep; how good it makes people, for when they are asleep they neither steal nor tell lies; and this to contradict a saying of one of the seven wise men, who said, "No man sleeping is good for any thing."

Well, but how did love sit upon Elsmere's stomach, how upon Rosa's? Why, reader, it lay very hard upon Elsmere's stomach; and, moreover, it gave him the heart-burn: he put down this day as one of the wickedest days of his whole life! he had done nothing since he came into his tutor's house but obey the will of the flesh: in the first place he had eaten a

good dinner ; and, in the next, he had fallen in love with a very pretty girl ; heinous sins with Elsmere, deadly crimes ! He fell out with his bed, called sheets, blankets, and feathers, sensual abominations ; threw his body upon the cold boards, and past the whole night in weeping and mortification ! Rosa, on the contrary, wrapped her person up snug enough in the bed-clothes, but in vain : love bit her like a flea, and gave her much disturbance : and, the worst of it was, it was a flea she could not catch and kill ; it had got into her heart, and bit it sadly, where she could not get at it to catch it, and stop its biting. Rosa had never been in love before, and she could scarce tell what was the matter with her : she found Elsmere was continually before her eyes, and his voice perpetually tinkling in her ears ; she lay very quiet, however, and fell to knitting nets to catch what was pretty well caught already. She fell also into sad alarms lest he should have a great deal more power over her than she

could get over him, and was very willing to queen it if she could, and burst into tears every time she felt her subjection. But this must suffice for our lovers at present.

Lady Alicia slept very well after a tumbler of red wine, made hot with spices, and a toast, her usual supper; and as for her conscience she had got it wormed, as prudent people serve their dogs; so if it should chance to run a little mad it could not bite her. She had had two small children, when she was young, natural children, as some folks call them, who had been brought up under the care of Dr. Grove, at Edinburgh. The Doctor shook his wig when they were brought to him, and some think he shook his head in it; he hushed matters up, however, and looked to the lads, that they should have a good education. When they grew to be men, they went into the army, and both died fighting bravely for their country. Why mention this thing? why not conceal this spot

in Lady Alicia's character? We will tell you, reader; a worse story than the true one took air by some unknown means, after Lady Alicia's death, viz. that they were the sons of *two* gentlemen, that they were still living, that she had left all her property to Rosa, and her own sons without a bit of bread. Trust to the world for doing things in a handsome manner: now, in regard to the two gentlemen, subtract one from two, and there remains one and the truth: further, be it said that this gentleman and Lady Alicia conceived a very sincere love for each other; some disagreement befel between the old folks; and, although every thing was prepared for their marriage, the affair was suddenly broken off: she certainly was not married to this gentleman; they, however, remained faithful to each other till he died, which event took place about two years before her Ladyship's decease—they had seven children—five of which died in their infancy: if any story is told, we hope this story will

be told, and this only. Lady Alicia lived too much in the gay world for such a trifle as this to give her any smart; and, to give her her due, the matter was kept too well a secret for the example to mix in the public atmosphere and poison others. The thing was wrong: be her own faults, however, and no more than her own, on her own head; her case was a hard case, but that is no excuse for ill conduct.

How did the Doctor and his lady sleep? Why, pretty fairly, reader, for fat old folks; he and the old lady changed night-caps in the course of the night. "Where's my night-cap?" said the Doctor, and finding one in the dark put it on: "Where's my night-cap?" said the old lady, and finding one in the dark put it on likewise. The Doctor lay as quiet in his bed as a bottle full of good liquor; took a roll over, however, now and then, to prevent the crust sticking all on one side, and rolled his cap off. This fine old couple had two beds mor-

ticed together, forasmuch as they were too large to sleep in one: the Doctor weighed one-and-twenty stone, horse-man's weight, without his wig; and his lady nineteen, without her flannel petticoat. It hath sometimes struck us with wonder what these monstrous great wigs have to do with religion? Neither the apostles, the disciples, nor the fathers of the church, wore any wigs at all; neither were the old archbishops, or bishops, ever known to owe so much as a single hair of their dignity to the tail of a cow: for, reverend sir, and we mean you no offence, from the tails of cows, and from the tails of calves, are these great wigs constructed—and the names of *cows kip*, and *calves kip*, are in the mouths of every wig-builder in the kingdom.

Old Boniface upon his pate
Wore, it is said, a horned hat;
One horn whereof was made to shew
The old law, t'other horn the new.

Old Comical.

If you wish to put the book down, reader, having a call any where,—to dinner, to supper, to bed, or to your sweet-heart, you may make a mark with your thumb-nail at “ Old Comical,” and leave matters for another touch : for this place stands but the half-way-house in your journey through this chapter.

We could give you half a dozen pages, reader, upon these good folks getting up; but we must be brief, and bring them all, except Elsmere, immediately into Dr. Grove’s breakfast parlour : Rosa’s eyes looked a little red and swelled ; which thing nobody took any notice of, though every body saw it, and much talk ran upon Dr. and Mrs. Grove’s visit at Spade-oak. Elsmere was not named, for some reasons ; one was, because Lady Alicia had it at heart to make a match between Rosa and that grave young gentleman : two thousand pounds a-year were two thousand more reasons : your sly old anglers never speak a loud word while they are a-fishing : it would be

time enough for Rosa to hear good news, and Lady Alicia knew very well what red and swelled eyes meant, in a young gentlewoman, before this day. Mrs. Grove stuck a little out, not because she was fat, but because she was afraid the journey would be too much for the good Doctor: Lady Alicia won the game, however, at last; and the day was fixed for the payment of the visit.

After breakfast, Rosa said she should like to take a walk and look at the University; so Lady Alicia and Rosa walked with the Doctor, college matters calling the Doctor to his rooms. Rosa asked whereabouts Mr. Elsmere's apartments were; and, being shown them, said, it was the prettiest part of the whole place: she walked twice close by the windows, to which Lady Alicia made no objection; and, one of the blinds being drawn, they saw him sitting at his book. "Ahem! ahem!" said Rosa, "I've swallowed a nasty fly." Elsmere heard her cough, which she most certainly never

meant that he should; and, looking round, saw, to his no small consternation and dismay, Lady Alicia, and some other lady walk by his windows; he could not be expected to recollect Rosa's face, having only seen her once in his life, and that as long ago as the day before: Lady Alicia, however, struck him as a person he had somewhere seen. Elsmere was deep in St. Chrysostom; and, jumping up suddenly, to look who it was that coughed, sat down again on the other side of his table, over the whole of which the vast folio stretched its length; he dropped his eyes upon the book again, and read away without ever finding out that, on his sitting down on the other side the table, the venerable father lay with his bottom upwards: a young man, in love, can read a book let it lie any way upwards; to be in love, therefore, is a very great advantage to young students in the Universities, who are engaged in the Greek tongue.

Lady Alicia saw Elsmere look round,

caught his eye—she was an old cat at catching of men's eyes—caught his eye, and made him a walking curtesy: Elsmere gave her a bow for her curtesy, though it was worth a great deal more; and there—how gallant a young man sometimes is!—and there the matter ended. “O,” said Lady Alicia, “if you are so cool as that, Sir, we shall soon have done with you:—I am mistaken, I find; all the love, I fear, lies on the wrong side.” If a hook would not do, however, Lady Alicia never gave matters up until she tried the crook. The excellent character Dr. Grove had given Elsmere, and his fortune, set Lady Alicia upon whetting her claws; and if she lost the mouse at last, she was determined it should not be the fault of the old cat. Lady Alicia and Rosa now made the best of their way home, and, though Lady Alicia lost her errand, and Rosa her heart, they both were determined to shed the last drop of their blood in the service. Her ladyship,

however, kept her intentions, at present, a secret from her niece; and Rosa, as carefully, her love of Elsmere from her aunt, who knew a great deal more of Rosa's secret than Rosa did of hers.

“That was a very agreeable charming young man,” said her Ladyship to Mrs. Grove, when she returned, “who dined at your table yesterday, pray what his name?”—not the first question ever asked by a lady because she knew all about the answer already. “His name is Elsmere,” said Mrs. Grove; “poor young gentleman! his head is turned with religion—he usually sits without speaking one word; I never saw him talk to any young lady in my life before yesterday—you must be a great favourite of his, Miss Smith.” “O dear, Madam,” said Rosa, with a pretty blush, “I am very much afraid it is not so; I should be very happy, I am sure, to engage the attention of such a sensible young man.” “Send him another invitation,” said her Ladyship, “send him another invitation,

Mrs. Grove ; I should like very much to be better acquainted with him." Upon which Mrs. Grove very kindly rang her bell, and, the servant coming, " Send the footman," said she to the butler, who happened to answer the bell, " send the footman, with our compliments, to Mr. Elsmere, and bid him say we shall be glad to see him to dine with us to-day at five o'clock." " To day will be too soon," said her Ladyship, " Mr. Elsmere will think——." " O no," said Mrs. Grove, " when the Doctor is not at home, I send for Augustus to dine with me every day for a week together—he is used to it ; but we can never get him to talk when there are any young ladies in the room : I am sure he did not talk to Miss Smith because he hated her," said Mrs. Grove, shutting her eyes and kicking out her petticoat, (a way she had when she was arch). " Not that I think you talked to him because you liked him, Miss Smith," added the old lady, giving her petticoat another touch.

"Indeed, Madam," said Rosa, "I like Mr. Elsmere very much; I think him a very handsome young man, and his conversation, though different from all other, very agreeable." N. B. Reader, the best way to tell a lie is to tell the truth in such a way as to make another think you don't mean it. "The man whom a young lady likes is the last she will ever commend," said Mrs. Grove; "when the Doctor won my heart I abused him from morning to night." An old cat knows where a kitten's tail grows. "It is very hard, indeed," said Rosa, "that I cannot praise Mr. Elsmere without being thought to hate him, or speak against him without being thought to love him. He is a very odd young man, but a very clever one: however, I think he is too grave to please the ladies. I like to talk to a gay man, but I had rather marry a grave one." "I vow," said Mrs. Grove, giving a jump up in her chair as if a wasp stung her, "we will make a match between your niece and

Augustus, Lady Alicia." "To marry us, and to make a match of us, are two very different things, Madam," said Rosa; "many are married that are not matched, and many matched that are not married: in regard to Mr. Elsmere, I would not have him unless he hated me; for men always change when they are married. I know a lady that is very happy now, whose husband was drawn to church by the united force of four strong horses. The same four horses draw her now, and she is as happy as a princess." "Four horses harnessed to a carriage have a prodigious power over a lady," said Mrs. Grove, kicking out her petticoat; "and I have some small inkling that if you were put into Mr. Elsmere's carriage with four good horses to pull against you, you must struggle hard for it if they did not draw you to the altar, Miss Smith, even if you were to meet Mr. Elsmere there."

"When one is willing to do any thing

which one would have another think one dislikes, Madam," said Rosa laughing, "one does not care how many horses draw one to do the business: main force is a delightful thing when it pulls the right way: Heaven grant my enemies may never know what it is when it pulls against their inclinations." "If your enemies should chance to be inclined the wrong way," said Mrs. Grove, "they may pray Heaven your prayer may not be heard. Talking about carriages, Lady Alicia, mine is at the door; and now, ladies, if you please, we will take an airing before dinner." Now we have packed them off, reader, we will, if you please, just take a peep at Mr. Elsmere: but, perhaps, you would like to alight and take a little refreshment: very good, we will stop here and change horses, and go on again presently.

SECOND PART OF THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Love, and its train of warm desires, found a whimsical reception in Elsmere's bosom. He consulted a variety of his favourite authors upon this dreadful passion, and found it to be condemned under very abominable names by them all: he, after summing up matters, and examining witnesses, (examining witnesses should have come first, and the summing up afterwards, reader; but we are in haste, and have a great deal of business on our hands, and so we hope you will excuse this hysteron-proteron as the learned call it)—yes, Elsmere, having examined witnesses, and summed up matters, came to a conclusion that love, to make use of the words in our catechism, was a sinful lust of the flesh, and therefore to be utterly condemned. He had ventured so far, however, as to translate an homily out of St. Chrysostom for Rosa, but started at the thought that the devil had tempted him to read even

a father of the church, to pamper his flesh. Marriage he found—for he had got the thing in his head—was not absolutely condemned by the severest writers; but as angels never married, and saints were very sparing of it, he came to a mind that it were best not to meddle with it.

He examined “St. Thomas Aquinas,” and found that marriage was carnal, and no ingredient in the composition of a saint; that it was vulgar and low, a thing that belonged to handicraftsmen.

St. Thomas puts the peopling of the world amongst the trades: some make hats, some make shoes, some make cups, some make platters, some make bricks, some build houses, some make puddings, some make pies, and some, as St. Thomas responds to his question, make children. Elsmere found that marriage was certainly allowed, but that he should get nothing by it; that is, it would add nothing to the treasures of holiness: the positive command in Genesis, however,

of Increase and multiply, and replenish the earth, and the woman being brought to the man by the very highest authority, staggered our young hero not a little : this was easily annihilated, however, by the superior wisdom of after times, which soon explained away this command, and turned the ladies out of saints' houses. Now Elsmere had a monstrous mind to be a saint, but did not much like the thoughts of turning Rosa out of doors if she had a mind to step in ; and, what was worse, he felt himself growing more and more in love with her every moment of his existence : at last he came to such a determination as scarcely ever entered the head of a two-legged, or a four-footed animal : this will appear in its place, or sooner ; and then it will not be in its place.

This good young man's brains, and a better there could not well be, were pulled one way by writers who held the possibility of human perfection, and pulled another by writers who held the

certain destruction of many, and the very great odds against any being saved from eternal damnation ; which was enough to distract a man's brains as much as if half were put into one platter, and half into another, and then set upon two separate shelves. Poor Elsmere, as he thought, had gone a long way towards perfection, when he fell among these thieves, who robbed him of all his merits, and told him, for his comfort, that a man must have a great deal longer legs than he, to step over the mouth of hell without tumbling into it. This staggered the young man; and these doctrines, mixing, like oil and vinegar, in his brains, filled his head with a strange sort of sauce. The reader may easily imagine what odd work must needs come when love was poured into such a mixture ; but love found means to get in, and stay in too, when it did get in, let what other gas evaporate that chose. Chaos was order and arrangement when compared to the fierce stir-a-bout in Elsmere's thoughts,

when love came in and tumbled down doctrines upon doctrines, and threw every thing into confusion.

A man's bowels who, by some blunder, had taken an emetic and a cathartic at the same time, were never worse confounded than poor Elsmere's brains, when love poured its aquafortis into their vessels. Be matters as they might, however, Elsmere soon found, after straining and heaving until he was half dead, that tartar emetic itself could never bring Rosa off his stomach: he flung about, and grew so desperate, at last, that he took down Old Juvenal from his shelf, and read his satire upon the ladies. In vain! Rosa was like a nail: the more she was hammered, the further was she driven into his heart. To give Elsmere his due, however, he fought stoutly; but a man must needs make a sorry figure on the field of battle who has lost his heart.

"Marriage," said he, "is certainly lawful; the severest writers cannot deny that if they would; the woman was

brought to the man in paradise,—none can deny that—and, furthermore, the Bible itself commands them to *increase*, and multiply, and replenish the *earth*; for these are the very words of this text of Scripture; and the Bible goes on further to prove, that even under the theocracy not only marriage was allowed, but even concubinage. Now I only want one young lady, and with her I should be content; but then great writers hold, that all such as set themselves apart as the purer vessels, *exalt* themselves to an higher pitch of excellence, and decline the *offer*; they grant the thing is allowed, but they need no such indulgence: if Adam, however, had declined the offer, he would have saved them all that trouble.

These writers make it out that it is better not to marry; that a wife is a disgrace to a man, a stain, an impurity; and was only created to bring him credit and glory in withstanding her temptations: that she hangs at his heels like

a great piece of lead, drags him and weighs him to the earth, and is an hinderance to his flight to heaven: that such will gain the highest places there, that shake the ladies off their skirts, who, at best, are only beautiful incumbrances; torches that kindle the eternal fire; brokers, by whom souls are bought into the funds of hell. Angels do not marry, and, therefore, saints should hold such an impure disgraceful contract in contempt and abhorrence."

Now Elsmere, who had a great mind to be both a saint and an angel at once, and outpitch all others at the bar, took a strange thought into his head, and, upon the strength of it, came to a determination to marry, to show folks how he could handle pitch and not be defiled. Some may think it was a pity that this young gentleman should have, as was the case, very strong passions, and, looking straight forward to victory, pride himself too upon the power of his enemy; for what was a conquest gained upon the weak?

How glorious the laurels torn from the helmets of the powerful! Ah! very true, very true indeed, but a man must be in a terrible tearing mood, to tear the laurels from this last set of gentlemen. Well, unless a man shoots he cannot kill his bird; so Elsmere was primed and cocked, and thought he had nothing else to do but pull the trigger: down he sat and translated one of the holy father St. Chrysostom's homilies for Rosa; and he had but just finished it, when Mrs. Grove's servant came with an invitation to dinner. Matters now seemed to move just as if they were oiled; the fierce battle in Elsmere's breast was fought out; and a smile, emblem of sweet peace, sat on his countenance.

Now it is a hard thing that when a man thinks himself the safest, he should just then be in the greatest danger. The hour of dinner came: Elsmere had room enough in his stomach for love and a bit of roast mutton: he spruced himself up, pulled out his frill before, put his homily

in his pocket, and off he set, all in order, to see his sweetheart. Rosa received him with a pretty smile; but if the poor maid had known what he had got in his head, she would not have been in quite such a smiling humour. Well, and so dinner came and brought—when folks smell roast beef they are led by the nose—dinner came, and brought the good Doctor, and Mrs. Grove, Lady Alicia, and Rosa, a family party, and the angelic Elsmere, to the table; whom not even Rosa herself could persuade to touch any thing but bread and water! what! not drink a glass of wine with his sweetheart?—no, Elsmere, like the sons of Rechab, drank no wine. “Dear me! Mr. Elsmere,” said Rosa, “I hope you are not ill?” “No,” said Elsmere, with much sanctity of face, “no, Ma’am, I am not ill; I thank Heaven, I was never ill in my life—a little cold now and then only excepted.” And, indeed, any that looked at Elsmere’s fine figure and ruddy countenance might imagine, all his punc-

tualities out of the question, that he certainly told the truth. He was a fine young Highland laddie, and Rosa loved him better than her—what shall we say?—her eyes. Lady Alicia, though she was grey-headed, could scarce keep the water in her mouth whenever she looked at him; Elsmere had such a pretty look when he smiled. Lawk-a-daisy! oh! how some ladies do love cherries! Ah, pretty reader, you laugh at that now, but it is very true for all that. Rosa, who had nothing to do with her thoughts but to plot, and knit nets to catch a pretty bird, took care to get all her trammels in order for him: she practised some very grave faces in her glass, got twenty good sentences by heart out of old Jeremy Tailor, and drew a picture of St. Athanasius, at full length, out of Cave's Lives of the Fathers. When Elsmere came into the room she gave him a chaste virgin smile, and dropped her eyes down upon the carpet: he made his bow, and gave her one in return,

which sat upon his lips as if it were frozen there. How can folks help their thoughts? Rosa thought she could find a way to thaw his lips; and, though she blushed at her own thoughts, might only be thinking of dipping a corner of her handkerchief in warm water—nothing in the world else one might swear—and as to a false oath—why—a false oath is a false oath—there's no harm in telling the truth.

Now, reader, we wish we could know whether you would choose to have us abridge matters or detail every thing out at full length that happened at this second meeting of our hero and heroine? The old gentlewomen, who condemn love stories in public, and read novels in a corner, through a pair of spectacles, will grudge every sweet smile, every squeeze of the hand, and every kiss they lose, by an abridgment of the talk and acts of lovers; while the young ladies, who cannot endure such nonsense for a moment—a moment being such a very

short time—will frown at a squeeze, spit at a lover's smile, like a cat, and cry "shocking!" oh—"shocking!" they cannot bear such things—oh! it is too much for them—it is odious, and horrid, and abominable, and the book goes slap into a work-box, or under a sofa-cushion, if any body comes into the room to interrupt their enjoyment. Well, between the old ladies and the young, we scarce know what to do; but, as no squeezings or kissing took place at this meeting between the lovers; perhaps the young ladies will forgive us, and the old ladies not be outrageously angry with us, if we shorten matters a little.

It is very good: Rosa knew her cue; and, by some accident or other, getting into the next chair to Elsmere, at dinner, almost preached him a sermon, extempore, before she went into the drawing-room; and Mrs. Grove, to her praise be it said, put herself to the inconvenience of staying half an hour longer in the dining room, through tenderness of inter-

rupting their conversation; now this, all things taken into the account, was very kind in Mrs. Grove, especially when it is considered that she was always in greater haste than most ladies, to get into the drawing-room. Elsmere, who had now formed his plan in his mind, gave way, with rather too much imprudence, perhaps, to the overwhelming force of his passion for Rosa, who, by her moral and religious prattle, had most completely won the heart of our young saint; but what charmed him the most of all was, she eat a bit of dry bread and drank a glass of water with him at dinner:—not that she dined on bread and water—no—she ate three or four good slices of roast beef of old England, and drank two glasses of your sound Madeira, with the jolly old Doctor; who, though he was a very good and worthy man, did not quite hold with your dry bread and cold water. The gout would have come directly into his stomach, and looked to what had been the matter, if he had.

Now, the ladies being withdrawn, the tutor and the pupil could not be expected to be such sticky companions as to stick long together when the ladies were gone. The Doctor, however, to give him his due, did his best to persuade his pupil to drink a glass of old port; and, to give it a relish, said, "Come Augustus, one glass to Miss Smith's good health:" but no—it would not go down. Elsmere said, with a blush, he never drank any wine on that day; and he gave a reason why he kept a fast on it. You see, reader, how very averse young men are to obey their tutor's orders; one would not even drink a glass of wine, though it was his tutor's orders so to do. O the perversity of youth! The Doctor, however, held his pupil for half an hour after the ladies were gone; and took much trouble to explain many matters to him, in regard to what human nature was capable of; and how far perfection could come amongst the weaknesses, passions, and

disturbances, of a poor mortal creature : he told him that if a man tried to do too much he would do worse than little : a man's moral and physical strength were very limited ; and, if he attempted to strain himself beyond either one or the other, it were very great chance, indeed, if he did not do himself a mischief : " not only himself," said the Doctor, " but others, too, who might be tempted to follow his example." Elsmere, however, had got it in his head that he was stronger than others, which perhaps was as good a proof as any of his weakness. Well, reader, these two young folks had now entirely won each other's hearts ; and it remained for one to speak ; and that, according to a foolish custom, was, it seems, not to be the lady : Rosa, however, would have gone to the last bit of string on this matter ; but, knowing Elsmere's severe morals, she was afraid to venture half way : if nobody spoke, what but a certain thing called " silence " could follow ?

Now in these bashful matters, an old lady is a monstrous useful thing : Elsmere, during the fortnight Lady Alicia and Rosa made their abode at Edinburgh, was often invited, and as often came, to Dr. Grove's hospitable board ; and, as nothing but the pretty kitten was lapping, what should hinder the old cat putting her tongue into the milk ? Aye, and Lady Alicia's tongue soon found its way into the dish ; she soon let Elsmere into a secret, which he, by the way, knew something of already ; told him that she had invited Dr. and Mrs. Grove to Spade-oak ; and ventured to hope, she said, that some day or other she might see him there ; and ventured to hope again—how venturesome she was—ventured to hope that he had no objection to come there : might he be engaged that vacation ? “ No, Madam,” said he. “ Choke him ! ” said Lady Alicia to herself, “ I wish he had one of Rosa's gloves in his throat ”—how slow he bites. “ Do you mean to spend the

vacation here, Sir?" said her Ladyship. "I don't know, Madam," said he. "I have room for a large party, at my house,"—her Ladyship could get no further; and, perhaps, the reader may think she went quite far enough—"I have room for a large party at my house," said she, and felt something which she had not felt for many, many years; felt as if she was going to blush! "Have you, Madam," said Elsmere, with his throat and mouth full of ice. Her Ladyship could get no further; and, knowing the man, she was afraid of being thought too forward, which would have upset the frying-pan; and then, you know very well, reader, what would have become of all the fat. "Why, Augustus," said Mrs. Grove, splitting the block at a blow, "how stupid you are! I am sure her Ladyship would be happy to see you come along with us." Elsmere bowed, and blushed, and begged pardon, and stammered, and said, "He hoped to be *enabled* to accept of her Ladyship's invi-

tation." "Enabled! enabled! Why, do you think you shall be strong enough to get into my carriage this day fortnight, if nothing should happen to pull you down to the ground, between this time and that—a stroke of the palsy, or paralysis—or any the like grievous attack on your constitution?" said the old Lady, winking her eyes, and kicking out her petticoat. Elsmere bowed in silence.

Lady Alicia and Rosa left Edinburgh the next morning, and saw no more of him. Rosa felt as if a great carving knife had been drawn with its edge directly across her heart—he might at least have come and taken his leave; but whatever else he took, Elsmere, for some reason, took no such thing. The deep cut, aforesaid, in Rosa's heart, however, soon healed at the delightful thought of seeing him at Spade-oak; and that for no short time neither: so Rosa wrapped herself up in wool, that her wounds might not take air, and laid herself at her ease in one corner of her aunt's soft

carriage. But we must not stop by the way to talk about what happened on the road; be it known, that Lady Alicia and her pretty niece came safe and sound to Spade-oak, and left nothing behind them except a warm little heart, which, by some accident or other, was not put up with the rest of the luggage. A young maiden in love, reader, sits upon thorns all day long, and lies upon the points of pins and needles all night!—this was just poor Rosa's case, so she got wounded all over. But there was a nice day to come, and come it did, and brought a nice sun along with it, which is more than some days do; and there is no help; for who can make the sun rise if he don't like it? But the sun rose on purpose this fine day to light the charming Elsmere into Rosa's arms; but he stopped as soon as he came to her hands, for some reason or other; notwithstanding he met with very good treatment at her hands, which might have encouraged him to have gone further; and at

her feet too, for Rosa was in no humour to kick him when he came ; and a pretty cow, reader, hath, sometimes, an unlucky heel, when down goes her own milk, and another cow's along with it, if the maid don't milk her first.

Elsmere had not come into Lady Alicia's magnificent mansion five minutes before he asked whereabouts the nearest church stood ? If some young gentlemen had asked such a question in his situation, for all knew more than he knew they knew, some would have thought they were in a hurry to be married ; but such a thought, at that time, was not in all his thoughts. The Doctor and his lady took three or four days to get the better of their jolts ; but they expressed great joy at being come into the old neighbourhood, where they had many friends who would be so heartily glad to see them : and we are sure, from the kind desire * you ex-

* The Reviewers, as the author has been informed, have expressed a wish that the history of

pressed, reader, a little time since, which gave us much pleasure, you will be glad to come into the old neighbourhood too, of which we shall give a short account in this place. Well, reader, we will begin with Mr. and Mrs. Decastro, who were, at this time, in good health at the castle; and, when they heard that the Doctor and his lady were arrived at Spade-oak, they sent a servant to make their inquiries how the Doctor and his lady did? Mr. and Mrs. Bartholomew Decastro were also stout and hearty at the farm; and George Grove and Julia, the good Doctor's cousins, were doing very well at their pretty cottage in Dairy Mead;

Mr. John Decastro and his brother, commonly called Old Crab, should be continued. The author begs to say, in this place, that he is very much flattered by this mark of their kindness, and approbation of his work; begs to return them his best thanks for the praise they have been so good as to bestow upon it, and for the faults which they have pointed out: their praise will always be received with pleasure, and their censure with gratitude.

and had found two little babies somewhere or other to enliven their house, which was more than old Crab and his wife had done at the farm : Genevieve, and Acerbus Decastro, the philosopher, lived very quietly and happily on the banks of the lake ; and Genevieve had lately presented the philosopher with two very fine specimens of the *animal implume bipes* at a birth.

Mr. and Mrs. Grove, at Hindermark, received the news with silent joy, that their worthy relations, the Doctor and his lady, were arrived at Lady Alicia Grove's place, at Spade-oak : Lady Charlotte and Harry Lamsbroke were at this time in Paris, where they staid until Lamsbroke Park, then under the hands of the workmen, should be made ready to receive them, intelligence having lately arrived that Sir John Lamsbroke, Bart., had died at Rome : and *we*, Old Comical, who now handle the pen of the writer, were married to *Madam Funstall*, of Dillies Puddle, where, if you will do

us the honour to call, reader, we will bring you a glass of rare old tackle, sing you one of our finest ballads, and give you the best the house affords. But we must now return to our hero and heroine, at Spade-oak. Before we proceed any further, however, let us just look back upon the table of contents of the chapter; or we may chance to promise more at the head than we perform at the tail: it is mighty good, and very well—all's done—so we shall turn the tap, and let no more out at this place.

CHAP. III.

Elsmere makes his Proposals to Rosa : Old Crab pays the Doctor and his Lady a Visit at Spade-oak : the Families in the Neighbourhood follow his Example : Mr. Decastro gives a grand Dinner at the Castle. Some talk about Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and Mr. and Mrs. Button.

ELSMERE had now made his abode for a week at Spade-oak ; and, although once upon a time it had been his design to make an angel of himself, he had made a little change in matters, and come to a mind to make a saint of himself and an angel of Rosa ; and was determined to marry her, if she would let him, for the sake of her soul, the beauties of which had now struck him pretty forcibly ; for Rosa, a sly toad, had taken a great deal of pains to be very good ; no nun so pious, no virgin consecrated to heaven, so lifted up above the clouds,

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the dross and fæces of this dirty world. But Elsmere had two designs upon Rosa's soul ; one was to enjoy it, and the other to be its steward and take care of it. Elsmere had not yet made his proposals to Rosa, certainly ; but all the neighbourhood were eager to see Rosa's new lover ; for, as hath been said, she had already had offers from several, of whom she neither liked the smell nor the taste : so it came to pass, no very uncommon thing, that folks had declared Elsmere to be Rosa's lover before he had declared himself. Elsmere, however, could not well have made his escape if he would ; for, what with Rosa's leading, and a hundred driving, the poor young gentleman had but one way to run. Lady Alicia, the Doctor, and his lady, all took their hammers in their hands, laid the match upon the anvil, and went to work at it like three blacksmiths !

Now the gay mansion of Lady Alicia, always crowded with fine folks, was but ill suited to the taste of Elsmere : a tree

that used to grow so much alone, transplanted into a thick wood, was put to much inconvenience; brushed on this side, and brushed on that, Elsmere expected to lose the tail of his coat, and used to look round, sometimes, to see if it were all safe behind; he held most of his customs fast, however, and his fast-days, in spite of other people's teeth: some took him for a jesuit, some for a Roman catholic, and some for a mad-man. Elsmere's fine figure and handsome face were a letter of recommendation to all the ladies; but every body marked him for Rosa's sheep; and Rosa was so greedy that she would not spare so much as a mutton-steak of him. One of the arts of a match-maker, is to spoil a man's market for every body else but the lady in hand; this it was that breathed a whisper about the neighbourhood that he and Rosa were within the diameter of Dr. Grove's wig of being man and wife. Elsmere, what with a push from one, and a push from another, and the coax-

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ing arts of Rosa, began to feel a sort of necessity to speak his mind to the love-sick maiden: he was now come to determination so to do; and the only doubt that remained with him was, whether to make his proposals by word of mouth, or by letter? Now Lady Alicia had a very fine library, but it was the very last place in the house where a man might study; it being fine summer weather, he broke out into the park and gardens; and then Rosa lost him for some hours together, for she, of course, could not run after him, unless it was on some message from her aunt, Dr., or Mrs. Grove, a plea which they took care to supply her with as often as they could.

The lovers had never yet been alone together at Spade-oak; Rosa was quick enough to see that he had some pretty thing to communicate; so she contrived to make up an accident, one day; a receipt for making which, upon the like occasions, may be of service to the

ladies. Seeing Elsmere in a field at a distance from her window, she contrived to get, unseen, into the next, where she gave a boy a penny to drive some cows, just into the right place: well, peeping through a hedge, she saw Elsmere to be in the right place too, and fell a screaming, as if she was in some very great need of him. Elsmere heard her voice, and leaped over the hedge; running to her assistance, he asked her what was the matter? "O," she said, "the cattle were coming at her, and had terrified her to death!" It was lucky that her voice outlived her, however, and brought her dear Elsmere to see her pant and play her pretty tricks while supported in his arms. Elsmere, never having had a lady in his arms, before that day, did not know what to do with such a thing; Rosa lost her senses, or pretended so to do, for five minutes, and what could Elsmere do? It was his duty to support her: presently she took it into her head to come to herself, with-

out having quite one hundred miles to come on her journey ; and the young gentleman, seeing her open her eyes, began, very kindly, to make inquiries after her health. She still leaned on his arm, as one extremely weak from such a dreadful exertion and disturbance of mind ; and begged he would lead her into another field, out of sight of the bulls and the cows. Rosa knew very well there was a nice snug seat under some shady trees in the next field, and she had but just strength enough to get there before she dropped down on a bench ; and, having hold of Elsmere's arm was no very bad hint for him to sit down beside her, which, by some accident, he happened to do. Well, and so —after some more languishing and panting, by which she well knew how to set forth the beauties of her person to the best advantage, Elsmere began a discourse upon the soul. This was not quite so much to the purpose as she could have wished ; it came round, however, to

the right point at last—Elsmere, applying his hands to both sides of his face, to compose his features, spake as it followeth: viz. “I should imagine, Miss Smith,” said he, “you have read that the body is but the crust and shell of us, the soul the kernel: the body must be cracked before this kernel can be got out of it; the body then is cast aside, as a nutshell, at our dissolution, as a thing whereof the kernel stands no longer in any need; this kernel, in us, is the seed which springs up into eternal life.” Rosa fixed her fine eyes upon his delightful countenance all the while he spoke, and that out of civility, and to show her strict attention to what he said. He went on thus: and she went on looking at him—“My dear Miss Rosa,” said he—Rosa blushed, “My dear Miss Smith,” said he; “there is nothing but our souls that merit our regard; and it is not only our duty to cultivate and adorn our own, but to do the best we can to cultivate and adorn the

souls of our relations and our friends. Love, my dear Miss Smith"—Rosa blushed again, a deeper crimson than before—"love, my dear Miss Smith, that is, true love, is hatched in our souls, and nothing ought to captivate us but the beauty of our souls: the body is only a skin, or rind, it is not worth our estimation; but the soul is the diamond in the box; it is the soul's lustre alone that should fill us with rapture for one another: to continue the figure, we should do the best we can to polish one another's souls; and nothing on this earth gives people, whose souls feel a kindness for each other, a better opportunity to polish one another's souls than marriage." This word threw Rosa a little off her guard; she blushed, and turned pale, and fidgetted about upon the bench, just as if the wood were come to life again, and was shooting out thorns into her as she sat. "I am very much pleased," continued he, "I am very much pleased with, and feel a kindness, Miss Smith,

for your soul; and it would give me great pleasure if you would give me your consent to polish it." "Sir," said Rosa, with a cheek of crimson, I, I, I, I, I, I, I,—I:" and had a good mind to have fainted away, but was afraid of being found out: she fetched a pretty sigh, and hung her head; a rose, o'ercharged with dew, was like her; for a few drops fell from her rosy face to the ground: these were tears of joy, reader, but you must not tell any body that. "I would not, my dear Miss Smith," continued he, "be thought to mean that I have it in my power to polish your soul more than you have it in your power to polish my soul, but that we shall mutually polish one another's souls; to give and to take mutual brilliancies from each other; to give a mutual finish to each other's souls, and brighten them for a better world than this is."

"Then may I beg for your consent, my dear Miss Smith? may I beg for your permission to do this thing for you,

and of you to do this thing for me?— Now speak the word, as Heaven may bless your soul!” Mean what he might, and Rosa was not a little puzzled to know what he meant, she was, at all events, willing to make sure work of it, do what he would with her soul; so she dropped her sweet face upon her bosom, and said “*Yes!*” A nice little word, reader, wasn’t it? and it just fitted Rosa’s pretty little mouth.

Now she was not displeased with the compliment he had paid her soul; but had quite as lieve have heard some pretty things said of her body. Lady Alicia’s first bell now rang, which put people more in mind of the flesh than the spirit, upon which our hero and heroine made the best of their way into the house, to get ready for dinner. When Rosa got into her dressing-room, she fell into a muse upon what had passed between herself and Elsmere: do what she could, however, she could not, for her heart, think that he meant any other than to

make her an offer: if she had been sure of it she would have jumped out of her skin directly; but, upon second thoughts, she concluded it to be quite as well to stay in it until she was; and, we think, she did very wisely not to go down to dinner without her skin.

A very few days after the arrival of the Edinburgh family, Old Crab gave orders that the saddle should be put upon Old Crop, with a candle sowed into the crupper to save the old mare's tail; and he forthwith trotted to Spade-oak, to pay his respects to Dr. and Mrs. Grove. "Well, Doctor," quoth Old Crab, shaking hands with him, "I'm glad to see you, and you Madam; you are strangers in these parts. Who's this young spark, ha?" "Why, you have not forgot my old friend Elsmere's son, have you?" said the Doctor. "The young scoundrel has grown out of my knowledge," quoth Old Crab; "he was a good boy when I was last in Scotland." "Yes, Mr. Bartholomew, and is a good

boy now, though I say it that am his tutor—a very good boy, and a very good scholar too.” “That’s a good hearing,” quoth Old Crab; “you have got some clever rascals in your country. Well, Master Elsmere, we shall be glad to see you when my friend the Doctor, and Madam here, come to the farm.”

“We mean to spend a few days with you, my good old friend,” said the Doctor, “before we leave these parts.”

“Aye, aye,” quoth Old Crab, “go your rounds, go your rounds, Doctor, and come to us last: I’ll order my wife to put up some fowls to fatten for you against you come, and we’ll see if we can find a chine of bacon to come to table with them.” “You must stay and dine with us, Mr. Decastro,” said Lady Alicia, of whom Old Crab had not taken any notice, “and I will send a carriage for Mrs. Bartholomew.” “No, no, I can’t stay to day,” quoth Old Crab; “your kinsman has sent for me to come to Hindermark; he wants my advice

about buying Master Smith's estate : he has been hankering after Smith's land these ten years ; it lies pretty much embrangled amongst Grove's property : if Smith will sell it, Grove will make a pretty thing there." " Have you heard from papa lately, Mr. Decastro ? " said Rosa. " O Miss Watersquirt, you are there, are you ? " quoth old Crab, giving her a letter out of his pocket book. " But, Mr. Decastro," said Lady Alicia, " I have a little business to talk over with you when you are at leisure. " " I can't stay now," quoth Old Crab ; " I will call on you to-morrow after I have had my dinner, and then I shall find you at breakfast, I warrant : " saying which, Old Crab marched out of the room without turning his head to the right hand or to the left. Old Crop neighed, when Old Crab came out. Old Crop and Old Crab were old acquaintance : the poor old mare had carried Old Crab for one and twenty years, and never gave him one tumble. We beg to offer Old Crop

as an example to the fine ladies who are apt to make a false step now and then : a steady old gentlewoman in her way ; she had brought Old Crab nineteen colts in her time : every cart horse upon Old Crab's farm was husband, son, or daughter, niece, or nephew, to Old Crop. Now it came to pass, that Old Crab and Old Crop were the first gentleman and lady that paid their respects to Dr. and Mrs. Grove, but they were soon followed by the whole neighbourhood, who all came to see the Doctor and his lady ; not because others came to see them, but because they were glad to see them ; not because they were at a fine house, but because they were good and worthy people ; not because they wanted to be seen to visit them, but because they wanted to visit them ; not because it was the fashion to come, but because it would be a grief to them not to come : but of these divisions thus far.

Now amongst others that came to see them, were Mr. and Mrs. Decastro, Mr.

and Mrs. Grove from Hindermark, Mr. and Mrs. George Grove, Mr. and Mrs. Acerbus Decastro, and Mr. and Mrs. Bartholomew Decastro; and finally, which used to be lastly, we, Old Comical and our lady, alias Mr. and Mrs. Mathers, of Dillies Puddle, Lord and Lady of the Manor of Cock-a-doodle, in Northamptonshire.

Now as soon as we had all seen Dr. and Mrs. Grove, the next thing was this, viz. we wanted to see them eat: so Mr. Decastro got a great dinner ready at his grand castle, and invited all the fine folks aforesaid to come and see Dr. and Mrs. Grove eat. The Earl and Countess of Beamystar, Lady Euthelia Ray, and Lady St. Veal, formerly Lady Budemere, were on a visit at Mr. Decastro's house—it must do your heart good, reader, to see all our old party got together again in the old place, Lady Charlotte and Harry Lamsbroke, now Sir Henry Lamsbroke, Bart. excepted, and they were in Paris: what business

had they in Paris at that time? They were called upon to attend a certain trial, which must be nameless in this place, as we should be loth to give any offence; which is no little proof of our forbearance; for every body knows that to give offence is one of the greatest luxuries in the world.

Hav'nt you told a small fib there? No, reader, no fib—not any fib at all—and why? The gentleman who sits on his nag at Charing Cross all ready to start—the very first man he hears tell a lie in London, will stick spurs to his horse, and go full gallop out of the metropolis! and every man will agree that to hear such a thing as that, in such a place, would be enough to frighten any thing made of stone out of its wits, as well as out of London. Well, reader, Mr. Decastro's grand dinner was not like poor Mr. Smith's; he had something better than wheel-barrows full of chaff-bags in their cocked-hats and court-dresses come to his door; and now we

talk of Mr. Smith, a good deal was said about him at dinner, and after dinner, too: it arose from this. Mrs. Decastro asked Rosa if she had received any account from her papa and mamma lately? begged to know how they did, and if they were likely to pay a visit at Spade-oak soon? Rosa said, she had received a letter from her mamma—"Aye," quoth Old Crab, interrupting her, "it came to me with one from Smith, wrapped up together, and franked by a fellow named Goose; Smith is getting sick of his neighbourhood; I think your kinsman, Doctor, will get hold of that land at last: Smith has got a proud gang about him, he talks, that gallop him down in the mud and stand to no repairs: who the devil is Goose, do any of ye know? Bartin used to frank Smith's letters." "Goose is member for the Borough of Seven Stars," said the Earl, "the family has been known in parliament a good many years."

Old Comical broke forth into a laugh

at this place, for some reasons. "What is the humour, Mr. Mathers?" said Lord Beamystar. "Goose is an odd name for a Member of Parliament, my Lord," said Old Comical, "but the bird called up the Romans to save the Capitol; by accident though, as some write. The old French ate their geese alive; the Romans cut their throats first, and roasted them afterwards; so the geese called a Committee of the whole House upon this question—whether it were most expedient to be roasted by the Romans, or eaten up alive by the Gauls? and what with calling Order! order! chair! chair! and question! question! they made such a cackling that the Romans could not sleep in their beds for them!" Here was a loud laugh, when Old Crab, who was talking to Mr. Grove across the table, broke out, and scolded Old Comical for making so much noise. "Why, Master Grove, what I said was this;—" (Mr. Grove could not hear what Old Crab said, for the

noise Old Comical had raised)—“ what I said Master Grove,” quoth Old Crab, was this : “ Make Smith an offer of Mason’s house, that now stands empty in the corner of your park ; buy or rent which he will : he told me when he was here last summer that he liked the place, and, as he likes farming, let him have Bennet’s land, that falls next Lady-day, at the old rents ; the offer may bring him to sell his estate, perhaps ; now’s the time to push him, Master Grove ; when a man is ill at ease in a place, it is as good a time as any to persuade him to leave it. You may offer him an exchange of land here, quantity for quality : I never saw Smith’s estate ; but, by all accounts, Bennet’s farm would come very well into the scale against it. “ Look you, Mr. Bartholomew,” said Mr. Grove, laying his fore finger all along one side of his nose, “ Look you, Mr. Bartholomew Decastro, the case is this : I have four thousand acres in Mr. Smith’s neighbourhood, which form a complete

circle round a place called Beesmere common field, containing, by computation, about three hundred and fifty acres. Now three hundred acres in this place belong to Mr. Smith, and the rest to others; all claiming a right of thoroughfare through my farms, and that in two places, by which my tenants receive much annoyance and damage: Mr. Smith has two hundred acres more in another common field called Palmer's Butts, which, together, make up the whole of his property in land; this is the case. My object, therefore, is as follows: I would purchase all Mr. Smith's land in both these common fields, and then move for an inclosure, which, if carried, would give me every thing in Beesmere common field, and put the whole of my property in that neighbourhood within a ring fence. As matters are, my tenants are liable to perpetual disturbance, annoyances, and damage; and what with pounding of cattle, bringing actions of trespass,

and quarrelling with their neighbours, their fingers are never out of the fire.

“ Well, Master Grove,” quoth Old Crab, “ are you in a mind to offer Smith the choice of an exchange or purchase? for, by all accounts, he would be glad enough to get out of the neighbourhood: he was bred and born here; I dare say he would be willing to come back to the old place: I shall answer his letter to-morrow—” “ Then, if you please,” said Mr. Grove, “ you may make Mr. Smith the offer of an exchange or purchase.” And this buttoned up the matter for the present. A very general wish was now expressed that Mr. and Mrs. Smith might come and live in this neighbourhood, where people would give him fair quarter if they met him upon the road. In the village of Three Stars they took the whole way, and turned him, wife, horse, and buggy, into the ditch. Both the letter to Old Crab, and the one which Rosa received from her mother, were full of complaints of this

kind ; and, though Old Crab kept the contents of his letter very much to himself, Rosa thought a bag was the last place for a cat ; so she opened its mouth wide enough for fifty cats to come out, and all the ladies in the drawing-room, where they went to crack their nuts, gave signs of great indignation at the usage of Mr. and Mrs. Smith. This letter, which she received from Old Crab, struck some of the first sparks into Rosa's bosom, which soon after lighted such a fire in her father's neighbourhood ; and which, reader, you have seen in its full blaze in the former part of this our History.

This topic now engaged the attention both in Mr. Decastro's dining-room and his drawing-room, handled with much spirit by the gentlemen in the one, and the ladies in the other. The Earl of Beamystar said, " I make it a rule in my own neighbourhood never to overlook a gentleman, be his fortune what it may : I always make it a rule to return

his visits, and find a time, if he wishes it, to eat some ham and chicken with him; and we sometimes drink tea with the Curate of the parish, who cannot afford to give his friends a dinner. Others are to do as they please: I feel much pleasure in making friends of every gentleman near me; and I am sure a man's happiness is increased in proportion as he pleases people and makes friends: if the curate, which I invite him to do, sends us two or three invitations to come and drink tea with him at the parsonage, and we happen to be engaged, we invite ourselves: he is the least of all the gentlemen around us, a very worthy young man, and, what I always admire, though I am an unlearned person myself, our clergyman is an excellent scholar: yes, he is the least, and the poorest, of all the gentlemen in my place; and therefore I make it a rule to assure him, by all means, that he is as worthy of my attentions as the rest. I am a man of an odd turn," said the Earl,

addressing himself to Old Crab, "but a man's pocket is the last place I look into to find his merits. Heaven hath been so kind to give me, out of its bounty, a property nearly equal to any in this kingdom, and to place me and my family high in title, rank, and honours; now I don't think it is quite the best way to despise a poor curate, and refuse his dish of tea, to show my gratitude to Heaven for such its favours; and more especially when the poor parson is in many things a better man than myself. People in our station, Mr. Decastro, have a dignity to support, and an appearance to keep up; but I must own that I never rise so high in my own esteem, as when I find occasion to show myself the most humble." "All's right," quoth Old Crab, "if you don't get proud of your humility."

While the worthy Peer was holding forth to the gentlemen, the Countess was in the pulpit upon the same subject in the drawing room; and this in answer

to Genevieve, who had been spitting fire at Mr. Smith's neighbourhood. You have not forgot, reader, that Genevieve is Mrs. Acerbus Decastro? Genevieve had made some very angry remarks upon the usage of Mr. and Mrs. Smith, when the Countess said, It very ill became folks to take advantage of their high stations to throw offences down on people's heads that were below them. "Mamma and I," said Lady Euthelia, "often drink tea with Mr. and Mrs. Withers, the Curate, who have nothing but a dish of tea, and a slice of bread and butter to give their friends." "All this may be very well managed in one's neighbourhood," said Lady Beamystar; "it pleases people, and to please another is to please oneself. One can easily distinguish one's parties into such as suit one another, and sort them as one sorts one's cards; not put a club amongst one's diamonds, or a spade amongst one's hearts. Now Mr. and Mrs. Withers, whom Euthelia has just mentioned, and

who actually make shift to live with five children on two hundred pounds a year, are people that can enjoy themselves in any party, and we make no scruple to invite them to meet people of the most superior order, without their looking like the deuce of clubs amongst the diamonds; they are people bred in the best manner; but not so of others, and we make up our parties accordingly; but I must tell a little story of Mr. and Mrs. Withers.

We happened to have the Earl and Countess of Thomas, the Marquis of Ten Stars, and his lady, and some others, to dine with us; and as two people sent excuses, we invited Mr. and Mrs. Withers to fill our table. This was talked of in the place, and bred a little ill humour; some thinking that Mr. and Mrs. Withers came in for a little more attention, or honour, as folks pleased to call it, than came to their share. The party, just named, were staying in the house with us when we heard of this

matter, and a Mr. and Mrs. Button were known to say, that they should have been invited to my Lord's grand party, as they were pleased to call it, before the Curate and his wife. Lord Thomas, who was present, and heard the story, said to my Lord, "Send Mr. and Mrs. Button an invitation to dine here to-morrow, and ask the Curate and his lady to come again, and just mention the reason in your note to Withers." Well, the hour of dinner came, and Mr. and Mrs. Button were announced; when they arrived at the door of the library where we were sitting, they made a full stop, and proceeded no further, notwithstanding the servant had preceded them and named them to us. We were surprised at Mr. and Mrs. Button not making their appearance; and the servant who announced them looked about him when he retired, and seemed like one who had lost something. We waited some time in expectation of Mr. and Mrs. Button, and began to think they must have gone

into a wrong room ; when, the servant having left the door a little way open, Lord Thomas descried a curl of Mr. Button's wig, who stood at the door, peeping into the room : Lord Thomas immediately walked to it, and, opening it, discovered Mr. and Mrs. Button, very finely dressed, standing at it as if in doubt whether to come in.

This discovery, I am sorry to say, occasioned a little merriment amongst the young people, which I and Euthelia put a stop to as soon as possible : I now hastened to the entrance of the room to receive Mr. and Mrs. Button, and brought them in, neither of whom could speak a word, that either myself or my Lord could at all understand : we put them both safe into two chairs, and, to say the truth, they really seemed to be frightened out of their wits ; they made such a ridiculous appearance, that they distressed me and my Lord extremely. Euthelia behaved very well ; but the rest of the young folks, do all they could, and I

will hope they did their utmost, could not conceal their laughter : I hope Mr. and Mrs. Button were quite convinced that they had no business to be where they were : The servant now came in again, and announced Mr. and Mrs. Withers, who certainly had the fortitude to come into the room like other people, and knew what to do when they got there. Mrs. Withers saw, in a moment, the situation of poor Mrs. Button, and with great good nature, notwithstanding what she and Mr. Button had said of them, took that lady under her protection ; which, I assure you, was a very great relief to me.

Mr. Withers was engaged in paying his respects to the ladies, and did not see, or, at least, did not take notice of Mr. Button, who sat like a man in the chair of torment at the Inquisition, till Mr. Twinkle, son of the Sir Robert Twinkle, who lives somewhere in Mr. Smith's neighbourhood, gave him a jog on the elbow, and showed him Mr. But-

ton, with a very uncivil laugh. Upon which, Mr. Withers, who was standing on the other side of the room, held out his hand to Mr. Button, asking him very kindly how he did? This drew the attention of the whole party on poor Mr. Button, who now arose, and making the best of his way across the library to shake hands, as it was supposed, with Mr. Withers, not well knowing what he did, or where he was going, kicked up some of the carpet on his way, and came down with his whole weight upon his nose. Poor Mr. Button, being a little round man, rolled over the moment he came to the ground in a very ridiculous manner, and his nose, which was by no means a short one, bled very much. A great many in the room now laughed aloud; Mrs. Button fainted away in Mrs. Withers's lap; and Mr. Withers, with all the humanity in the world, conducted Mr. Button out of the room, with his white satin waistcoat stained with two rivers of blood. Mrs. Button, as soon as

she recovered from her swoon, followed Mr. Button, attended by Mrs. Withers, who presently returned, made Mr. and Mrs. Button's excuses, and said, that they were gone home.

This affair put an end to all jealousies among some folks, on account of Mr. and Mrs. Withers's invitations to our parties; and really, to invite people to large parties, who are not at all used to such things, is not to give them any pleasure: and I am sure poor Mr. and Mrs. Button heartily wished to be out of the house. Such as are not used to appear in the world, had much better be moderate in their desires of appearing in it. My Lord and I take a great deal of pains to be civil to every body in our neighbourhood; but we find it no very easy matter to please every body in it after all; and, in some instances, I really think my Lord goes too far. If people's breeding is really good, as is the case with Mr. and Mrs. Withers, their having a small or a large fortune should, I think,

not be regarded : we can invite our Curate and his lady to any party without distressing them or ourselves ; he is a gentleman and she is a gentlewoman ; and we can go to the Parsonage and drink tea with them ; it is all they have it in their power to give us, without frightening the family out at the windows, if I may be allowed such an expression. But this is not the case in other places, where people are glad to say that they have seen us without being very glad to see us, and sit upon thorns all the while our visit lasts : and, really, if the visited sit upon thorns the visitors must sit on thorns too, if they find it out ; and, unfortunately, it is very apt to appear ; for to force one's self to appear at one's ease, when one feels a great deal of pain, only adds to the struggle. What pleasure can there be in visiting people, when one carries terror and dismay into their houses ? When I call on Mrs. Button, she looks just as if she had a lioness in the room with her ; and the

difficulty one has to command one's countenance, in these terrible cases, adds not a little to one's distress : I have sometimes been forced to get up and run away into my carriage, for no purpose on earth but to laugh. I have sat at Mrs. Button's till I could sit no longer—Euthelia must have muscles of marble to keep her countenance—If people would confine themselves within their classes, all would be well, and all would be at home, and all at their ease ; I had much rather visit my house-keeper, and sit down in her room, than visit some folks, disturb their houses and their pulses, and bring a fever with me into their families : I never visited Mrs. Button, on the coldest day in winter, without leaving her face in a fine dew before I had done with her ; so far, indeed, I might have come within the prescription of her physician, and done her as much good as I don't know how many grains of Dr. James's powder ; but, after all, it is quite shocking to go into a good wo-

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man's house, moisten a lady in this manner, and leave her to catch cold after I am gone : who knows what harm might come of one's visit ? Mrs. Button seems to have, and I dare say has, a very good constitution ; she should have some advice to take better care of it than to expose herself to sudden and violent heats, or the state of body that is put into a fire. My Lord says that I must visit folks to please them ; why, certainly I might come suddenly upon Mrs. Button while she was mending her stockings ; and, though I made her prick her fingers, I might cure her of the tooth-ache, or a fit of the hiccoughs, and that would be pleasant enough. It appears to me that every lady and every gentleman have proper places assigned them ; and as long as they can be content to sit quietly down in their places they will sit at their ease ; and I would just take the liberty of hinting to them that a cushion is quite as bad as a pillow stuffed with thorns. Why should Mrs. Button wish

to be visited by people who make her ashamed of her daily and useful occupations? If I call on Mrs. Button, and find her in the midst of ten thousand stockings, and one upon her arm in the due course of repairs, what is there for Mrs. Button to be ashamed of? It is more to her credit to mend her stockings than it is for mine to make her idle.

CHAP. IV.

What passed in Mrs. Decastro's Drawing-room, when Tea and Coffee were served, and the Gentlemen called into it : Old Comical asks Lord Beaumystar's leave to cut a Caper.

YOU must be amazed, reader, when there were no less than ten ladies in Mrs. Decastro's drawing-room, that nine women should suffer one to have all the talk to herself! The pleasant Countess, however, kept them laughing; so, as they could not talk and laugh at the same time, their laughing was some excuse for their not talking. Now, reader, we, like a bishop at a confirmation, want to touch a great many heads, in a very short time, in this place; for we must think about getting back again, as soon as it is possible, into the south. When the gentlemen came into the drawing-room, and that immediately

after the tea and coffee, which was no little compliment to the ladies, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and their neighbourhood, were the subject of their conversation ; for Mrs. Smith, who corresponded with several other ladies in this place, as well as her daughter Rosa, had taken especial care that nothing should be lost for want of an accurate register.

Old Crab said he was sure there were faults on both sides ; for some that complain that their neighbours are proud will take care their neighbours shall not keep all the pride to themselves. " Smith, however," said he, " has credit for bearing all patiently." Lord Beamystars said, " Let people be what they would, they should not be made a public jest of, but in some very extraordinary cases of provocation." Every body commended the patient forbearance of Mr. Smith ; but the opinion was not quite so unanimous on Mrs. Smith's side of the question ; they all agreed that she was a very worthy good woman, but

wanted, in some urgent cases, a little patience and discretion. Genevieve was extremely angry with the neighbourhood; and said she had rather have her pocket picked than be made a jest of: called such conduct monstrous; and said she had rather be tortured in her body than in her feelings.

“Well,” said Old Crab, “if they don’t like their place, now is the time to change it for another; Master Grove, here, will let them have the house where Mason lived; and exchange, or buy, Smith’s land, whichever he pleases: Smith likes farming; he may come into Bennet’s farm at Lady-day: you mean to stand to your word, hey! Master Grove?” “My mind is fixed, Sir,” said Mr. Grove, “and I beg you will have the goodness, Mr. Bartholomew Decastro, to write to Mr. Smith, if you please, to-morrow—you can write the best on business—I shall write by the same post, and use all the means in my power to get my worthy cousin to come into this

place." Saying which, Mr. Grove shut up his mouth. "Well! well! Master Grove," said Old Crab, "I'll see what can be done, I'll see what can be done; —'twill be best, I think, for all parties, if we can turn Smith's head this way: where should a man live but among his relations and friends? Now, look ye, Master Grove, if I get an answer to my letter, and find Smith willing to come over to us, I shall be in London early in the next year, upon old Dobbs's business; and I will run down to Master Smith upon this matter. Be that as it may, however, I'll send John Mathers to measure the land, and take care to see Smith before I come back again: If Smith has a mind to sell, or exchange, invest me with proper powers, and I'll take old Pettycraft, the lawyer, with me, and do the business."

Mr. Grove took his nose in his hand, for the better conveniency of whispering; and, going close up to Old Crab's wig, said, in a whisper, it should be

done. The ladies said a vast deal upon this subject ; but we must pass it over, as their talk would add at least six hundred pages to our history : After casting all up, however, the aggregate amount was, that they would all join hands and pens, in one letter, in which ten ladies, all twisting their persuasions together, into one great rope, round Mr. and Mrs. Smith, they came to a resolution it should go, and haul them into Cumberland by downright force of cable : and thus ended this matter.

Now it came to pass that the tea and coffee were carried away, save and except what was spilt down people's throats, and the card and other tables of amusement were set out. Dr. Grove engaged Old Crab at a game at chess for sixpence. George Grove and Elsmere, who seemed to be much taken with each other, fell both together into a deep conversation ; and Genevieve and Rosa got into a snug corner of the room to talk over Rosa's new sweetheart. " You

are a young slut," said Genevieve, "not to tell me and Julia of this love-affair sooner; remember your promise to make us your confidants in all your love-secrets, and tremble for your ears!" Rosa laughed, and said, that she remembered being told by a very wise old lady, when she was a very little girl, that a person could not tell another what she did not know herself: and added, that it was but on the morning of that very day that Elsmere had ever said one word about love; and then, in such an odd way, that she scarce could tell what he meant. Rosa then told Genevieve what passed between Elsmere and herself in the meadows; and asked her opinion upon the case. "As to his being in love with you, Rosa," said she, "I know that by infallible signs; say what he might to you to-day, it would not add one tittle to my knowledge, in regard to that matter: his way of addressing you had something odd enough in it; but there is no doubt about what he meant: he was willing

that you should think him serious, and that made him grave; but, seriously, Rosa, the most religious men always make the best husbands. I can give you an example of this in mine: we have no hold upon a man that is a profligate; he takes us for our beauty or our money, and very soon spends the one and gets tired of the other. There is no one good thing that comes as an ingredient, in a good husband, but what is brought by religion: come, you smile at seeing me so serious this evening; but Elsmere's religion is all in favour of your choice." "My choice! Jenny," said Rosa. "I have not gone so far as to tell you that." "Come, come," said Genevieve, "you need not tire yourself with travelling, or 'going so far,' as you call it. I can see you both dote on each other; no two bees ever loved honey better; and, my sweet Rosa, may yours and Elsmere's honey last for ever. But I was going to say a few words, and serious ones too, on your objecting Els-

mere's religion to him; it is the very thing, of all others, which both Julia * and I, who love you, are the most glad to see in him: you cannot reckon one penny upon a man without it; he will do every thing which you would have him not do without the least check or restraint: if you look for happiness with a husband who has no religion in him, you will be deceived; would you have him healthy, would you have him sober, would you have him chaste, would you have him temperate, no gamester, without ill temper, a man of honour, a true lover of your virtues as well as your person; would you have him adorned with every good quality, and free from every vice, there is no one thing can make him thus complete but this religion which you object to! Oh, my dearest Rosa, hate not Elsmere for what he is to be the most beloved!"

"But," said Rosa, "it makes such an

* Mrs. George Grove.

odd queer thing of him : instead of praising my eyes, my lips, or my shape, he did nothing but talk about my soul ! —When Lord De Fonté courted me, and when Mr. Silverthorn proposed to me, they were thrown into such raptures by my beauty—don't laugh, Jenny, for I know I am very handsome—but I could not bear either of them." "Come," said Genevieve, "you are a vain thing, and Elsmere will throw himself away at last." "O no!" said Rosa, but he shan't though ; I will come twice a day, every Sunday, to your uncle's church. I am a wicked thing, I know : but I will be every thing that is good to charm my dear Elsmere ; for indeed, Jenny, don't tell any body but Julia, indeed, and in very deed, he is my dearest dear Elsmere." "Yes," said Genevieve, "if you were even to take your oath of it, I think I should believe you : but the very sore and ulcer of our minds, Rosa, is this, that we love the men for what we should hate them, and hate them for what we

should love them ; a pearl I picked out of one of my uncle's * sermons. You like Elsmere because he is handsome, not because he is good ; now if he were good, and not handsome, you would not like him ; this is very much a woman's way, and that is one reason why it is so foolish ; for, between you and me, Rosa, we are most of us great fools, and never greater than when the gentlemen are concerned.

“ Ah ! Rosa, I know what you mean by that saucy lip ; but I am no better than others, for I confess I fell in love with my husband's person first ; but I have been very lucky to find something better than his person, good sense : my good man is odd, very odd ; look where he sits in that corner, with his eyes shut — now he is no more asleep than you are when you stare at Elsmere.” “ Oh, fie ! Jenny,” said Rosa, “ I don't stare at him, do I ? ” “ Yes, you do ; you do

* Mr. B. Decastro, alias Old Crab.

more, you gaze at him," said Genevieve :
" every body knows what is the matter with you both ; so beat up your cushion, and make it as soft as you can ; now I can tell you a secret : your aunt, Lady Alicia, and Mrs. Grove, are taking a wonderful world of pains to make a match between you and Elsmere ; and I cannot reflect, without a smile, upon the wonderful world of difficulties they have to go through, to buckle two people together, in the straps of matrimony, that do so cordially detest the sight of each other ! " " Is this possible ? " said Rosa. " I only overheard them talking about it this day in the shrubbery ; and Lady Alicia said she would allow you a thousand a-year, if the latch met the catch, as Mathers says, as long as she lives, and would not forget you in her will. " " Oh ! my dearest aunt, " said Rosa, " I shall love her for ever and ever ! " 4

" Why, " said Genevieve, " he was invited to Spade-oak on purpose, by your aunt ; he is a young man of good

fortune, Rosa." "Dear Jenny, what has he?" said Rosa, "I never thought about his fortune." "Why, he has two thousand a-year," said Genevieve: "that Reverend gentleman that sits there in a great wig, and a pair of spectacles, is his trustee and guardian, and is come to take an inventory of your good qualities before he gives his consent to the match."

Rosa had discovered a good deal of what Genevieve was telling her before, and had little occasion to be put upon her guard against the Doctor, or any body else, except herself. "Oh!" said Rosa, "if that is the case, I must turn my best side outwards, when the Doctor looks at me through his spectacles. Thank you a thousand times, my dear Jenny, for all this intelligence." "I scarce think," said Genevieve, "that you, with all your keenness, Rosa, could have missed much of what I have told you: at all events, it goes to prove my love for you, if it goes no further; but I

can hardly think you are in earnest when you object to Mr. Elsmere because he is religious." "Why, Jenny," said Rosa, "I must not expect to find a man without his faults; you know I have had five offers, but I never yet saw any body whom I could love so heartily as I can Mr. Elsmere." "Put *do* for *could*, Rosa," said Genevieve, smiling,—“but it is very wrong in you to call religion in a man a fault; and, I must repeat it, religion is the only thing on earth that can or ought to give a man a true value with us. Beauty, in him that is without religion, is but a gathered flower, and soon will fade; with it, will flourish like the unplucked rose. Religion is to beauty what the root is to the flower; sustains it, gives it strength and nourishment. It keeps our husbands temperate, Rosa, and therefore healthy; it makes them prudent, and therefore keeps them rich: a man that expects to be called to an account for his conduct will take care what he does to all; and for his duties,

how he behaves to all; and for his words, what he says to all; and for his thoughts, what he thinks of all: a religious man, Rosa, will always make the most allowance for our frailties and our faults; his religion rebates his anger; if he disapproves of any thing, he will speak to you with mildness, and even pity; if he corrects, it will be done for the sake of your good, and not his own revenge: he will not be more ready to find a fault in you than to acknowledge one in himself. But remember, my dear Rosa, if you marry a religious man he will be the best pleased to find you so too: the honey-moon is a thing that's apt to wane; religion only keeps it at the full. These are hints which I have picked up from my good husband and my worthy uncle.*

“I am not very apt to be serious, Rosa; but I have your welfare so much at heart, that when any thing of value is

* Old Crab.

at stake, I can't help being so. I shall have some more talk with you on this subject; for, to say the truth, I am afraid you do not think enough of it, or know enough of its importance. Now mind what I say, and don't stare so much at Elsmere," said Genevieve, laying hold of her arm, to draw her attention; "mind the advice I shall now give you:—be content with Elsmere; you have a sad trick of coaxing two or three into a fool's paradise with you at once: there is a vanity in this which is vicious enough, not to mention something worse, an unpardonable cruelty. You may depend upon it, Rosa, be your beauty what it may, if you play such tricks as these, no man will think you worth his notice, that is worth yours: men of sense will despise you; the coxcombs will leave you; and, between both, you will not be able to get so much as a fool at last."

"You are a little too hard upon me, Jenny," said Rosa, in what you say

about religion ; it is a thing, I own, that I don't much understand ; my aunt never goes to church in town, and very seldom in the country, so that if I know so little of it, it is not so much my fault ; but I think it is a thing I should like if I knew more of it: it takes care of our souls, folks say, and, I suppose, I have a soul as well as other people, but I never knew whereabouts to look for it." "Come," said Genevieve, "you are laughing at me now, and I should rather hope you are, than find you so ignorant in these matters as you make yourself out to be." "It is no fault in me Jenny," said Rosa, "if I don't know what I have never been taught: ten or a dozen of us used to stand up in a row at school, and say a thing called a catechism,—something about the pomps and vanities of this wicked world and all the sinful lusts of the flesh: I could always say my part in it, but I never understood it: we always said it on dancing days, and as soon as we heard the dancing

master's fiddle in the dancing room, we always ran away and began dancing. In regard to religion I should like better to go to church, if I understood more what they were talking about in it, but I am always very much pleased with Mr. Decastro's sermons, because I love satire : he preached one on the follies and vices of the world which, you know, I was so charmed with, that I asked him for it, and took a copy of it ; but it has put me much out of humour with the ways, manners, customs, and fashions of people who live in the world they don't know why, and go out of it they don't know wherefore."

" You are an artful toad, Rosa," said Genevieve, " and I scarce know when you are in jest and when you are in earnest." These ladies talked thus far : not that they were tired of talking ; a very odd thing had happened at Mr. Decastro's house that evening, if they had been, and we should have been glad to have had such a wonderful matter to

have put into our History as that : Quintus Curtius leaping into the gulf, and the earth shutting her mouth upon him, would no longer have made the people stare. No, the ladies did not shut their mouths because they were tired of talking, but because Rosa saw Elsmere sitting alone, George Grove having been taken in to cards; and took it into her head, that if she could bring the thing honestly about, she should be as glad to talk with him as with Genevieve : so she walked up to the back of George Grove's chair, which stood the nearest to him, and pretended to be looking at one game while she played another. There is no deceit in the ladies, nor ever was, since to-morrow, or before the day after next Monday ; but people have brought praise so much into discredit by abusing it, that it is dangerous now-a-days to give merit its due, without hearing a monstrous outcry about flattery.

“ Do you like cards, Mr. Elsmere ? ” said Rosa. “ Why, Miss Smith, you

“speak as if you think I have played at cards,” said he, “for you cannot well expect an opinion if I had not; but to say the truth I never did, so I can’t answer your question.” Rosa had now pulled up the sluice, and such a flood followed, that Lady Alicia, who was deep in a game at whist, said, “Go nearer to Mr. Elsmere if you must talk to him, or I shall lose the odd trick.” Rosa was always a very dutiful niece and obeyed her aunt in all things, and she went and sat down by Elsmere, talking all the while as fast as she could get the parts of speech out of her mouth. Rosa was a delightful companion; there never was such a chatterbox in the world; she would fix her fine eyes on Elsmere’s handsome face, and talk—good Heavens! how she would talk!—This young jade had every thing that was lovely and bewitching in a woman; Elsmere sat in raptures, and she bred such a ruinous rebellion between his reason and his passions, that when the said grave old

gentlewoman made essay to read the riot act, she was fairly beaten down and trodden under foot with the riot act in her hand. "It is well," said Elsmere in his own mind (a place where a man speaks sometimes when he hasn't a mind to be heard), "it is good," said he, "to be led into temptation; we cannot otherwise know the full strength of the enemy: I will dare him to his beard, and let him know who is his master." A man that boasts enjoys a victory beforehand, and triumphs without the plague and trouble of hard rubs and dry blows. Elsmere fixed his eyes on Rosa's lips as she talked, and it came into his head to try an experiment as soon as he should find a time, which experiment, as it was very curious in its way, will appear in its place. You must take notice, reader, that every thing that Elsmere did, whether in love or out of it, was meant to disappoint the flesh and mortify the carnal man, and you will see what fine work he made of it: you must also

remember, reader, that Elsmere had drawn up a receipt out of the best authors which he could find, and this to make an angel or a saint; and he sat himself to work with diligence to collect materials and ingredients for the aforesaid composition; but you must mark this, that it was all with the very best intention: he was a little unfortunate, however, in two things—the means he took to bring about his ends, and laying no ground for the infirmities of human nature. It was odd that a young man should have read that famous saying of the wise sage, KNOW THYSELF, so often over, and not get a little better acquainted with that same gentleman called SELF than he did. Experience, however, introduced that *stranger* to his acquaintance before he and that great instructor parted company. In this great work which Elsmere had undertaken, a beautiful young woman, and what made matters better, one that was in love with him a great deal more than he expected

to be in love with her, came very well to his hand : now as he was a young gentleman of very strong passions, here was temptation enough to set out with to satisfy a moderate man.

We shall now tell a little story, and then return to Mrs. Decastro's party in the drawing-room. It follows thus : Rosa could hardly make any thing like a head, and much less any thing like a tail, of his queer talk in the meadows, and what he meant by the odd desire he expressed to polish her soul for her ; she was not long, however, to give her her due, before she got that matter cleared up. Walking with him in the shrubbery at Spade-oak one day, she began to talk about souls, said she was very ignorant, and wanted to know what sort of a thing a soul was : this was a sort of horse-block to help Elsmere into the saddle of the subject ; he met her just in the right humour, and got upon the business without straining his leg or his back, or tearing his clothes : but as soon as he was

mounted on the subject he set spurs to the thing, and never drew bit until he made it manifest to the blushing Rosa, that the desire he had to polish her soul was none other than a wish to marry her. Well, this was plain old English, and Rosa, after a little fluttering, and blushing, and fiddle-dee-deeing, turned her head on one side, as if there was no harm in doing what she did not see, and put her hand by guess into his upon the bargain. This was livery of seisin, as the lawyers call it: a lady can't blush for ever; that would be silly; so, after a time, the two lovers fell into a sweet conversation. Rosa was knee-deep, and Elsmere over his boot-tops in honey, when Elsmere said he wanted to try an experiment; she asked what it was, and he then caught her in his arms and gave her a very hearty kiss. As soon as he had done it, and the kiss was over, he took to his heels and ran away as if old Satan had unkennelled fifty brace of devils after him.

It was some time before Rosa could recover from the great shock this unexpected salute had given her constitution: they were sitting side by side in a little harbour when this experiment was tried, and this sitting was lucky for Rosa, or the giddiness in her head had brought her to the ground. An unexpected kiss gives a lady a great shock, like the shock of an earthquake, and she is angry or pleased just as the person who causes the concussion is offensive or agreeable. Elsmere's attack was so sudden that she had the best of all excuses for not scratching his eyes out, and more than that he ran away before she could get her nails ready; so far appearances and features were saved, though, perhaps, Elsmere might have sat it all out without getting much damage done to his countenance. When a lady is frightened out of her senses it is some time before she finds her way back again into them: upon Rosa's return to hers, she began to look about her to see if she could find—

has the courage to run away : suppose I had stood my ground and kissed her again, would not that have been a worse defeat ? I should then indeed have heard the devil crow ; but it is true the greatest glory had been to have stood my ground, and not have kissed her again : but this is step by step work ; none come to be the greatest heroes at once. I am raw in action, and, after all, the skill of the commander is sometimes the most shown in a good retreat ; and the quicker that retreat is made too the better : ” upon which Elsmere put on his coat and waistcoat, and was determined to meet the flesh again in the field the first oppor-

tunity : and that opportunity—how young warrior was !—that was the very moment, Alicia’s dinner being up, like the trumpet of battle, stomach for the fight, whereupon, videlicet

the enemy was like to fall upon his rear, found he had made his retreat good, scratched his ears, and stole away to his apartment. As soon as he got into his room, he locked his door twice, and tried to give the key another turn ; but the bolt had made two shots already, and seemed to think that enough for the young gentleman's present safety, for it could not be persuaded to make another. Upon which he pulled off his coat and waistcoat to cool himself after his run, and began to consider what a terrible thing a handsome young lady was in the field of battle on which he had now so stoutly turned his back. " We may well pray," quoth he, " not to be led into temptation ; how strong, how dreadful is this foe to man ! I am new in this field ! I have seen too little service in battle against the flesh to stand my ground in it. However, a man that runs away is not always a man subdued ; nay, perhaps, to run away is sometimes to come off conqueror : it is not every soldier that

has the courage to run away : suppose I had stood my ground and kissed her again, would not that have been a worse defeat ? I should then indeed have heard the devil crow ; but it is true the greatest glory had been to have stood my ground, and not have kissed her again : but this is step by step work ; none come to be the greatest heroes at once. I am raw in action, and, after all, the skill of the commander is sometimes the most shown in a good retreat ; and the quicker that retreat is made too the better : ” upon which Elsmere put on his coat and waistcoat, and was determined to meet the flesh again in the field the first opportunity ; and that opportunity—how lucky the young warrior was !—that opportunity was the very next moment, for Lady Alicia’s dinner bell rang, like the sound of the trumpet before battle, to whet his stomach for new combats with the flesh ; whereupon he took his weapons in his hands, videlicet, his knife

and fork, and flourished them over a sirloin of roast beef, in defiance of its savoury allurements, and then dined on bread and water. Some say he had eaten a good luncheon a little time before dinner, but this is a piece of defamation ; for we can pass our word with the reader that he had not eaten a morsel since his breakfast : yes, he flourished his knife and fork in defiance over the roast beef, smelled the savoury meat, and saw—when he boldly cut a slice for others—saw the nice fat, saw the rich gravy run, and his mouth did not so much as water at it.

“ This is a meager day with you, Mr. Elsmere,” said Lady Alicia ; “ is it quite impossible to tempt you to exchange your bread and water for something more palatable—some fish, some soup, some venison, or some pie ? ” “ By your Ladyship’s leave I shall dine upon this to-day,” said he, dipping his bread into a glass of cold water.

Pull up! what is the matter, reader? —what's the matter! why, have you forgot Mrs. Decastro's drawing-room? —The check-string! in good time:— we had like to have run too far.—Now to show our skill in joinery, and mortise this matter into the—this metaphor will not do at all! you must take an allusion from the coach; what have the carpenter and joiner to do with check-strings, and pullings-up?—Very well said, reader, we shall have the metaphors all together by the ears, and when they fall to fighting, who's to part them? Now for it again, reader, to show our skill in putting horses to, and harness this matter into the traces of our history—there's a beauty for you, reader!—to harness this matter into the traces of our history—(some say, "a penny for your thoughts!" now that thought is worth three-half-pence, it is a pearl of the brain, and the brain breeds pearls like your oyster: some call this a disease in the fish and

the extravasation precious: well, a metaphor may be also, and likewise eke, a disease of the brain, and the extravasation humorous: a picture of a simile, and what's a painter but a maker of similes?) Elsmere and Rosa were talking to one another in Mrs. Decastro's drawing-room; she drinking love as fast as she could swallow it, and he gazing at her attractive face and shape, in order to try what force Reason had to break in and bridle the wild horses of the soul, namely, the passions; when a loud clap of thunder made the whole party start just as Old Crab gave Dr. Grove a check-mate, and Old Comical took fifteen shillings of the Earl of Beamystar for the balance due upon the account of whist. Old Comical took the money in the vole of his hand and said, "My Lord!" "Well, Mr. Mathers," quoth his Lordship, "what have you to say?" "May I beg permission of your Lordship," quoth Old Comical, "to cut a caper?"

His Lordship laughed, and gave him free liberty ; whereupon Old Comical forthwith cut his caper, and it was such an odd motion that Old Crab himself could not help laughing.

CHAP. V.

What became of Mrs. Decastro's Party. Elsmere and Rosa's mutual Promise. A short Account of the State of Mr. Decastro's Neighbourhood. Lady Alicia Grove's Illness and Death. Old Crab and Rosa's Arrival in London, and what passed there.

WE felt disappointed in your last chapter, Master Mathers; we expected to hear more about your wife, and that more people would have talked in it; surely more was said than what we find upon record? Not a thousandth part of what was said is put down in the last chapter, courteous reader: if all that was said had been put down in it, there would have been no end to the chapter; you must eke out matters for us in your own imagination. Mr. and Mrs. Decastro, Lady St. Veal (the late Lady Bude-mere), Acerbus the philosopher, and Genevieve, George Grove and Julia, Mr.

and Mrs. Grove of Hindermark, Old Crab and his wife, and WE OURSELVES, John Mathers, alias OLD COMICAL, and our wife FUNNY, are all old acquaintance, reader: Elsmere and Rosa are the hero and heroine of these volumes ; these are the pictures now under our pencil ; the others are already hung up in our historic gallery, and, though we may just give them a little touch now and then, as we go along, to brighten a feature, recall a flying colour, we must, for the most part, let them hang quietly each upon its nail, until we have put Elsmere and Rosa safely into their frames and glasses. For, since you have done us the honour, reader, to call upon us for some further particulars of Mr. Decastro, his family, and friends, we have brought some others on the stage, who were not before introduced, that we might not have at that time too great a crowd upon our boards. Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Dr. and Mrs. Grove, Lady Alicia and her pretty niece Rosa, and the Earl and Countess

of Beamystar, and their daughter Lady Euthelia Ray, are, notwithstanding, old acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Decastro, as are others, whose very names are not yet known to you. Sit you still, however, good reader, and see these new performers play their parts, and take a useful lesson home with you, and a rule of conduct: learn from Rosa, not to abuse wit and beauty; from Elsmere, not to make religion and morality ridiculous. It is a scarce thing to find a religious man, a scarcer thing to find a young one so; and if Elsmere were one of those things which a man meets every day in the Strand, or in Oxford-road, sparks out of common flints and steels, they might fall into your tinder, reader, but never set it on fire. But Elsmere is no common man; you might break fifty eggs, and not find such a man as Elsmere in any one of them.

We have heard of the spirit being willing and the flesh weak; in Elsmere the spirit was willing but the flesh strong, so

much so that at times the spirit had no chance with it. Elsmere's intentions were always excellent: he saw the beauty of holiness and fell in love with it; he fell in love with Rosa, too, who was not quite the beauty of holiness: perhaps if she had been asked for a definition of the word, she would have been stuck in as much perplexity as a flea in a barrel of tar. Now these two beauties made a sad quarrelling and disturbance in Elsmere's heart: he loved them both, and, being a man of a very sanguine habit, he loved them both with an unspeakable ardour, and was at no little pains to reconcile them together, for if he could have had a quiet house of it he would fain have enjoyed them both; but, according to his notion of things, this was no very easy matter; for he seemed to think that he must pull off the body to please the one, and put it on again to please the other. The truth is, he had, very unluckily for his principles, fallen in love with Rosa's material beauty, which

gave the beauty, whereof we just now spoke, no little disgust. All Rosa's arts and her whole mind were engaged to captivate Elsmere; no school-boy ever studied his lesson more attentively for fear of the rod, than Rosa did Elsmere's fancy, likings, habits, and disposition, for fear of losing him. Spade-oak, the magnificent mansion of Lady Alicia Grove, was in Old Crab's parish: Rosa went to church with Elsmere every Sunday, to both the morning and evening services; all the way there, and all the way back again, her conversation was in heaven, though she had a good month's mind to something on the earth. She had now laid in such a stock of religious talk, so charged herself with texts of Scripture, pieces of old sermons, and odds and ends of divinity, that Elsmere thought if he had been measured for a wife, none could have fitted him better: he mistook her for an angel, which some lovers have thought their mistresses before now, and been surprised at last

that they should not know a devil better. You look as if you supposed that there never was such a thing as the devil in petticoats ; but if the devil bespoke cap, gown, and petticoats, at a milliner's, d'ye think she would refuse his money—bid him go to another shop? Now Elsmere had one objection to marriage—you stare, reader—but he had for all that : people are to do what they see good with their own eyes, certainly ; and so, reader, when you are tired of stretching yours, perhaps you will shut them up to give them a little ease, and then take t'other touch at it when we give you to understand the reason why Mr. Elsmere had one objection to matrimony ; so get your eyes ready for another great stretch—O ! you thought the reason was coming now directly ! O no ! not now ! one stare at a time is enough for any eyes in the world : now you would give a penny to know what Elsmere's one objection to matrimony was ; but you must have patience, and if your patience gets worn

out, you must get measured for a new suit.

No woman ever loved that sad rogue called man more heartily than Rosa loved Elsmere ; we cannot find words to fit the size and body of her fondness for him ; we cannot find expressions to clothe her affection for him : so if her affection, like the ladies of the present day, goes half naked, we cannot help that, any more than the ladies of the present day can help going half naked ; for, in these hard times, the ladies can't afford to buy clothes enough to cover them ; and that is a very good excuse for their nakedness. Rosa outwitted Elsmere in every thing ; her love was unfeigned certainly, but her religion was a bait.

Old Crab, who could shoot his eye-balls through a brick wall, which is as good as to call his eyes piercing and penetrating ones, otherwise they could not go through a brick wall, asked Rosa, one day, as she came out of church,

whether she could not find her way to the devil, without going through the church on her road to him? Rosa said, she was not thinking of the devil when she came to church, but he was always uppermost in a clergyman's thoughts. "You saucy young baggage!" quoth Old Crab, "and needs must, while such a babe of grace as yourself sit directly under my nose. What the plague brings you to church now as often as the doors are opened? you never used to come; has young Elsmere converted you to Christianity? Haven't you got enough about you for a young fool to bite at, without baiting for an ass, with religion on your hook?" Rosa kissed her hand to Old Crab, and ran after Elsmere into Lady Alicia's carriage, which stood ready with its mouth open, like the opossum, to receive her safe into its inside. Rosa was a smart lass at an answer; but Old Crab was too hard-headed for her. A repartee or two will pull some flags down; but Old Crab

was like a British line of battle ship ; it was not one broadside, nor ten, that would make him strike his colours. Rosa knew him of old ; and knew this, too, amongst other things, viz. that it was best to get out of shot.

But we must now come back to Mrs. Decastro's party, whom the house-maids had not, as yet, swept out of the drawing-room ; for, as soon as Old Comical had cut his caper, there came on a violent thunder-storm, when Mr. and Mrs. Decastro, whose hospitality was equal to their large fortune, invited their guests to beds and night-caps, and hoped they would stay under her tiles and timber, until the sun, the candle of our system, threw light upon matters, and a man might see which were land and which were water.

Old Crab said, he did not mind the thunder-storm ; put on his great coat, and walked home, sixpence richer than he came ; for he had beaten Dr. Grove at chess, and fingered his coin.

Here followeth a short account of matters as they at this time stood in Mr. Decastro's neighbourhood. Mr. and Mrs. Decastro were in good health at the castle, upon which Mr. Decastro had dug a new fish-pond in his park; and the only reason why he called it a fish-pond was this, videlicet, because he kept fish in it: we have known ponds called fish-ponds that had not any fish at all in them, which ought to be called ponds, and not fish-ponds to deceive serious people, who are led to suppose there are a great many fish in them, because they don't see any, and that is a great cheat. Mr. Decastro, of old, used to run into extremes: he had now built a new hot-house, and a new ice-house; and this was not, as some folks supposed, who had been at much pains to account for the thing, to show people how he was minded towards them; that when, for example, he met a friend whom he loved, he might take him into his hot-house, in order to give him a warm reception;

come alone ; she presented her husband with one at a time, and, as soon as he had eaten that up, she brought him another. Mr. and Mrs. Grove, of Hindermark, George's papa and mamma, proceeded in their old way on their journey through the world, whispering and making signs, as matters fell and rose in this tumble-down-get-up-again business called life. Poor Mr. Grove, however, had had a paralytic stroke ; and Mrs. Grove became deaf in her right ear, so that her left was the only ear left to receive her husband's whispers : they still continued to keep a world of company, and went to London when it was in season ; which, you know, reader, is in the spring ; it is good for nothing all the rest of the year. Lady Charlotte Lamsbroke, and her husband, were, at this time, not in England : Sir John was dead ; he never returned to England after his shocking attempt on Julia, which he confessed, on his death-bed, to be plotted by himself, and some others. So now we must put

Harry Lamsbroke's name between Sir and Bart., which just makes a sandwich of it; and that for this reason, viz. because Sir and Bart. are two slices of bread and butter, and Harry Lamsbroke a bit of meat between the two slices. Well, as it is aforesaid and above mentioned, and the like recapitulations, or pulling in old heads. Old Crab and his wife—as good a woman as ever made a shift, or got up fine linen—Old Crab and his wife went on very well at the farm, with the assistance of us, John Mathers, alias Old Comical, that now handle the pen of the writer, bailiff, steward, and clerk of the parish, lord of the manor, moreover, of Cock-a-doodle, in the county of Northampton, esquire, and, though we say it that ought not to say it, of the quorum one, and Custos Rotulorum. Old Crab went on very well at the farm, put a penny by, though no longer for Julia, now married to a rich man's son, whose father allowed him five thousand pounds a-year; and she was very happy with

George Grove ; but every Sunday, when she went to church, she dropped a tear on poor John Carland's grave : Julia would often sit upon the melancholy stone that told her where he lay that loved her, and let her heart ache—his was broken. Yes, Old Crab still put a penny by, to help a neighbour without taking any interest ; a poor scoundrel that stuck in the world, as he used to say, and wanted a shoulder at the wheel.

Well, reader, we have told you of Lady St. Veal, once Lady Budemere, married again, and that to the very gentleman with whom she had been naughty ; he had changed his name for a good estate. It was a wonder, wasn't it ? that she accepted his offer ; but some ladies will marry a man for love, notwithstanding he has got a great deal of money. Lord ! what a proof of disinterested affection ! However, as far as women went, Lady St. Veal was a tidy body, with a clean face, and a pretty foot ; and what could a man desire more ? Ah !

reader, ah!—Love, beauty, brandy, and a stumbling horse, will sometimes bring a lady to the ground! Lady St. Veal fell, once upon a time, it is true; we have, however, told her story as well as we could. Oh! reader, oh! matrimony is a plaster, with a husband spread upon it, by way of salve, that will cure some sore places. Well, to put on a clean metaphor, Colonel St. Veal poulticed a certain great lady's reputation, and assuaged the inflammation of slander in its skin: and thus we stop that matter up. Now come we, John Mathers, and our newly married wife, Madam Funstall, of Dillies Puddle, we, Old Comical, that love to talk about ourselves; and that is the reason why we shall say no more of our own matters, save and except that we are great folks, living, at the squander of five thousand pounds a-year, but without breaking a girth, residing or taking seat at Dillies Puddle, keeping—here's a grand chain of participles!—keeping

our carriage and four, servants, horses, pig-styes, and a magnificent pond of ducks—but we shall say no more until we publish our own history, now ready for the press; aye, reader, all ready, the writing of it only excepted.

Now let this suffice for a short account of Mr. Decastro's neighbourhood. But we must get on—Dr. and Mrs. Grove had now eaten two dinners, at least, at every house in this place, besides whets, luncheons, &c. &c. If they did not know how to eat and drink in Edinburgh, the Doctor and his lady might now return into Scotland, and show folks which was the way down their own throats. Well, the Doctor's visit fell on the wane, and business required that he should once more turn his wig round upon this worthy neighbourhood: yes, business required that he should now show the hip button to his friends, and return to the learned University, in Scotland. We are forced to cut matters short, reader, or we could recount many a

good dinner whereat we ate, drank, and sung; many a merry meeting amongst our old friends and acquaintance, where we were fain to mount upon our old stool, and sing some of our best poetry to the company: but these merry meetings must come *hereafter* on the historic page, when we have done with the hero and the heroine of this part of our work. Well, now Dr. and Mrs. Grove took their kind leave of all, and left Spade-oak for the North. But they did not break poor Rosa's heart, and rob her of her sweetheart; the sweet, sweet, sweet, three times sweet, multiplied by ten times ten million sweet, Elsmere? No, reader.

Now, pretty reader, we have made you very comfortable, by saying that the two fond lovers were left together, to look their pretty looks, sigh their pretty sighs, smile their pretty smiles, and kiss their pretty kisses, over and over, and over again! But all these sweet-meats must be left to your imagi-

nation; and we must go on to say that Elsmere was now very well known in the neighbourhood; Rosa had marked him for her own, and he his Rosa, with the seal of love. Reader, it may be remembered what happened between them in the shrubbery at Spade-oak; have you forgot the stolen kiss? Not quite, pretty reader, we can see by that fine blush.—Well, Rosa could not imagine, for her life, what made Elsmere so very shy after that same sweet liberty had been taken with her pretty cheek, which was certainly made on purpose to be kissed! She thought he feared offence, and only held off to be forgiven: now she was afraid to tell him that she was not at all angry with him—but she could not forgive him, and that for this reason, because he had never offended her: still he held off, would take no hint to walk with her, though she often held her hat and her gloves in her hand at the very door; aye, and her parasol ready opened, lest the sun should become his rival, and

kiss her cheek in his presence : how hard it is on the ladies that they can only make signs! Ah! how often did she stand at the door, with her hat in her hand; how often did she say, Well, I shall not walk to-day! Matters did not go far before she began to think she had offended him: sometimes she thought she had parted with that kiss on too easy terms, and that he ought to have had a struggle for what he took without one; and Rosa, to give her her due, would have contested the matter, to have made the most of it, had she been prepared; for the more she had struggled the better, if she had been sure to get it at last; but how could she know how to act before she knew what she was to suffer? Now Elsmere had other matters in his thoughts: he found, unexperienced as yet in most things, what it was to play with fire: he found what it was to enter the field against such strong temptations; that he was by no means so stout a warrior as he had counted

himself; and that to kiss such a beauty as Rosa, and set all temptations at defiance, was a thing for better soldiers than he to do. Rosa and he met by accident, at a turn in the shrubbery, at Spade-oak, one day, a week at least, since the late skirmish, wherein our young knight did so little credit to his spurs: Rosa started at the sight of Elsmere; and he, as if way-laid by his enemy, and found unarmed: "How d'ye do, Mr. Elsmere?" said Rosa, with a blush which darted directly into Elsmere's poor heart, like a flash of lightning!—"Well, very well, thank you," said he; and the bold warrior trembled as he stood! "I am afraid you are not well, Mr. Elsmere," said she, "what makes you tremble so?" "I am—I am a little nervous," said he, "not expecting to meet you—a little nervous coming on the sudden—" Rosa soon found a bottle of salts for him, and tongue for herself, a servant that never wanted much calling for. "Mr. Els-

mere," said she, "if you are ill, we have an excellent physician, Dr. Grosvenour, residing here, in the neighbourhood; I will go and send one of my aunt's servants for him directly; dear me! I am so sorry to see you ill!" Saying which, Rosa put her handkerchief to her eyes, and certainly shed some very sincere drops into it. Elsmere, upon this, feeling his heart touched with her tears, suddenly caught Rosa by the arm: she now started away in time, but he did not follow her; she was provoked at this; for she would have been hanged sooner than started, if she could have foreknown he would not follow her. "My dear Miss Smith," said he, "I am a weak offending man. I feel as if I should go distracted for what I did when we last met in this retired place." Rosa now thought she had got her cue safe enough; and said, "I forgive you, Mr. Elsmere, I; do indeed, from my heart I do. Cease to vex yourself with any thought of it! You shall find, by

all I say and do, that all's forgot : indeed you shall !” Elsmere wept, and said, wiping his eyes, “ Alas ! my dearest Miss Smith, I am, I confess, very much to blame ; I fear I shall never be forgiven ! ” “ Oh ! Mr. Elsmere,” said Rosa, clasping her hands together, and raising her arms, “ what shall I do, what say, or give what sign, that you are truly and heartily forgiven ? ”

“ My dearest Miss Smith,” said Elsmere, with a stare, “ how can you possibly tell whether I am forgiven or not ? ” “ Bless me,” said Rosa, with a stare on her side, “ who in the world should tell if I should not ? ” “ I am sure,” said he, “ you cannot tell, unless you know how sorry I am ; and even then you could but guess.” “ What can you mean, Mr. Elsmere ? ” said she ; “ I am not very well pleased that such liberties should be taken with me certainly, neither can I suffer them any more ; but, as you seem to be very sorry for what you did, I am ready to

forgive you." After Rosa said this, she could have bit her tongue off: see what comes of speaking in a hurry: here was a great lie told, and that was very wicked! People don't know what may come when they let their tongues run in this manner. Rosa was, to give her her due, very angry with herself for telling such great stories; and made Elsmere think, in order to mend the matter, that she was angry with him. "I take your forgiveness very kindly," said Elsmere, "but, alas! Miss Smith, that is not all I want; I cannot love you and be innocent: my aim must be to subdue my passion, to conquer myself." This aim made Rosa start; she began to think, with no little perturbation, that he wanted to break with her; that he had seen somebody whom he liked better; and, because he had been observed to talk sometimes with Lady Euthelia Ray, a very pretty and a very elegant young woman, Rosa felt jealous of her; and, what is no new thing, without any rea-

son in the universe. Rosa's heart felt for all the world as if somebody had stuck half a dozen great pins into it: oh! she would have given a silver penny not to have been in love with Elsmere! As it was, anger, love, and jealousy, three as quarrelsome gentlemen as ever turned any poor lady's house out o' window, were all together by the ears in her bosom: if she had not been so sadly in love, how she would have pranced and flung about! This comes of young ladies getting in love with young gentlemen, and losing all their dignity!—Love is a sad puller down of the ladies, a terrible dethroner of the majesty of the PETTICOAT.

Well, but we must not let poor Rosa stand any longer biting her lips and looking like a fool; do what we can with her face, however, we cannot make it look like a wise one. "Mr. Elsmere," said she, with a voice that did not sound like that of a sovereign Potentate, as it ought to have done, and always should do

when a lady condescends to speak to a gentleman, a thing created on purpose to lick the dust at her foot—"Mr. Elsmere," said Rosa, "I don't understand you, I don't indeed!" and saying this she fell a crying.—Was there ever such a silly, foolish thing put into petticoats on the face of the earth? Never.—"I see you pity me, Miss Smith," said Elsmere; "and surely it is the best part of the promise that has been made between us, to pity and to assist each other in the frailties and weaknesses, the faults and infirmities, of our common nature." Upon which he had the boldness to take hold of her left hand, while her right was engaged in holding her handkerchief to her eyes, and knew nothing of the matter, and went on to say, "I love you, my dearest Miss Smith, with the utmost purity of affection that I am able—" Rosa took her handkerchief from her eyes, and smiled on him with her eyes full of tears—"and I am equally convinced," continued he, "that you

love me quite as well; but I have a reason, of all others the most important, to advise, for our mutual safety and happiness, that we take all the pains in our power to subdue our mutual passion for each other. I would not advise this if I did not feel propensities which are unholy in themselves, and which I make no doubt that you have the like perception of." Upon his saying which, Rosa left her handkerchief fluttering in the air, gave Elsmere a smoking box on the ear with her right hand, and made it tingle for ten minutes. Now it came to pass that Lady Alicia happened to come into the walk where the lovers stood, and saw Rosa box Elsmere's ears: her Ladyship thought she knew very well what was the matter, that the young man had given her a kiss, perhaps, and the young lady—such things often happen—had given him a box on the ear for not doing it better; but, when her Ladyship came nearer, she found she was mistaken, and, instead of kissing, there was some-

thing that looked very much like a quarrel between them. Now the pains she had taken to make this match, and the eagerness with which her heart desired it, collected, may go together to assure the reader that any quarrel between Elsmere and Rosa would be vexatious enough to Lady Alicia.

Rosa had told her aunt, some time since, that a mutual promise had been made between them, which was enough to satisfy any body that nothing remained but to do the parish business, as soon as the lawyers and the tailors, the milliners and the mantua-makers, could stitch matters together. Dr. Grove, Elsmere's guardian and trustee, having looked into Rosa, and found no great matter to object to in her composition, a thousand a year coming from her aunt by way of sugar in the pie, and having put a plummet into Elsmere's waters, and sounded him on the matter, was now gone into the North to put the plates and dishes all in order for the marriage feast, which

CHAP. VI.

*Lady Alicia advises with Old Crab about sundry
Matters : her Illness and her Death.*

READER, you seem to have got something in your nose, which comes of sniffing about after faults.—Well, Sir, 'tis granted; we could not draw off our matter to the lees in the last chapter, and if the vessel would not contain it, already brimmed, it is but an indifferent reason we own, but it is the only one we have for not pouring more into it than it could hold. But thus much by way of priming to the chapter—to pull the trigger—Lady Alicia felt her curiosity sting her like a hornet, to know what it was that had set Rosa a crying and fighting as she had done at the sun-set of the last chapter. Rosa, however, would not say; so her Ladyship must needs be content to know, which came of her pretty

to make their daughter upon her marriage. She now tried, but in vain, to get Rosa to tell her what Elsmere had said to offend her; for she guessed her to be very angry by her tears, which Rosa had not time to conceal, as her aunt came on her, round a corner, all on a sudden. This chapter has run on to nine-and-twenty pages: we must hold our hand here; the sun stoops to the west, and warns us to shoot off our weary team.

family and to places, has sorely grieved that this property should leave the old name, and, perhaps, the loss of the estate might be some trouble to him. Now in regard to mothers loving their daughters, that's something as uncommon as the unbounded love I bear my very dear niece: I love her more than a mother, and am come to a mind to leave her all my property, a few legacies excepted, and her father shall succeed her in case of her death; but this, my will, must be fashioned by some skilful hand: the lawyers, I know, are the people to be employed in these things, but the more they explain things to me the more they puzzle me, and this they call clearing matters up.

I could be glad to do without them in this affair—well, if I do not employ the lawyers I must look out for an honest man. My cousin, Grove, consults Mr. Bartholomew Decastro in all his affairs; he is a rough mortal, but I could be glad to court his assistance now in this thing

—I should not like a direct refusal—I will write to my cousin, at Hindermark, and beg he will touch him upon the subject : he is an honest man, and one extremely skilled in worldly matters ; I could be glad to consult with him in this business. I never could bring myself to a mind before this moment to think seriously on this subject; it looks a little ominous, but I am determined now to settle all matters concerning it, before I dismiss it from my thoughts.” Whereupon the old lady arose with much majesty, and, putting on her clothes, walked to her toilet, and presented herself once more before her glass : “ How melancholy a thing it is,” said she, “ to see a beauty in ruins !—when I was first introduced at court, my face was gazed at like a new star in heaven : alas ! how we borrow things in this world, and how punctual Old Time, the lender, is to take back what he gave us. Well, he will have bones and all, before he is satisfied—I must yield and follow others.”

Saying all this to her looking-glass, which, for some reason, did not mind one word she said, she rang her bell, and gave her maid a note for Mr. Grove, and gave orders that a man and horse should be dispatched immediately with it. Now it befell that Old Crab breakfasted at Hindermark this morning, coming from an errand to Mr. Grove, to adjudge a case between him and a tenant about some land; and while Old Crab was drinking his saxifrage tea, which he sometimes took in a morning, not as a medicine—for Old Crab never knew what illness was, except a cold, which no man can escape—but for the sake of the aromatic, one of Old Crab's luxuries—few men had fewer or wanted less—well, at breakfast, the butler came in and laid a note before Mr. Grove, without speaking a loud word. "A note from Alicia," said Mr. Grove, in a whisper, powdering his nose in Mrs. Grove's hair: upon which he opened it, read its contents, and put it into his note-case without

speaking a word. Mrs. Grove pointed at the note as it was on its way into the note-case, but Mr. Grove shook his head, and Mrs. Grove forthwith dropped her finger. . . As soon as breakfast was over, Mrs. Grove, before she retired with Genevieve and Julia, who were staying in the house with her, pointed again at Mr. Grove's note-case that lay on the table—she wanted sadly to see the letter—Mr. Grove shook his head a second time, when Mrs. Grove and her ladies retired to their apartment. As soon as they were gone, Mr. Grove put Lady Alicia's note into Old Crab's hand, who read it over and said, "I wish people would not plague me with their concerns; the lawyers will cut my throat some day—there—take and answer the letter—tell her I will call at Spade-oak to night at seven o'clock. I can't think what's come to the old woman; she never thought of death before, or I should have seen her at church; 'tis the last place she'll come to if she's buried there.

I don't like your Sabbath-breakers, Master Grove, that live in the world as if they had nobody to thank but the devil for what they have ; and where can such expect to go but to him for what they shall have, ha, Master Grove?—Well, well, tell the old woman I'll come and hear what she has got to say by and by." "You have heard of this match, Mr. Bartholomew, which is to take effect between my pretty cousin, Rosa, and Mr. Elsmere?" "Aye, Master Grove, I have heard it talk'd of; the Doctor, who has got his friend Elsmere's son in charge, asked me about the jade ; I told him she had no money if he looked for that, and as for her character I could not be answerable for the baggage ; she was a London bred one, and might be good for nothing as far as I knew ; whoever married her she would give him plenty of sauce to his pan-cakes. Her aunt, here, is to make her an allowance—I think he said—of a thousand pounds a year : do you know any thing about it, Master

Grove? The lad's brain's turned with religious notions; how comes the Doctor not to have looked to him better?"

"The Doctor, fearing he should have too little," said Mr. Grove, under the eave of Old Crab's wig, "has given him a little too much." "Too much!" said old Crab, rubbing his ear which Mr. Grove had tickled with his nose; "it is sometimes worse than folks having too little; they get as proud as the devil, and bring a good thing into disgrace." "The boy is a good scholar, the Doctor says, and either has, or soon will have, two thousand pounds a year. It is a very good match for my cousin, Mr. Bartholomew, and, therefore, we all give it a countenance."

"A good match!" roared Old Crab; "what the devil d'ye call a good match, ha, Master Grove? Two great money-bags will come together, if ye call that a good match. I don't much like the wench, to say the truth; she is like enough to bring a man to a jail, or the

gallows ; I don't much like her, not I ; she's of the wrong hackle for me. I told Smith fifteen years ago, when he and his wife were at my house, the girl would come to no good ; but that profligate old harridan, her aunt, must needs have her head, and breed the minx after her own humour ; but if Smith can go into a book-stall, he don't care who goes to the devil. I don't like your London schools, Master Grove, where a man gives two or three hundred pounds a year a-piece with his brats, to have his family turned into a puppet-show.— This jade was raised in one of these hot-beds ; she had better been bred in Bridewell, and then she would have got well flogged if she had got nothing else she deserved : but I have told Smith, and the Doctor too, my mind ; they must follow their own heads ; and if they break their necks they will set other fools a good example.” “ Well, Mr. Bartholomew,” said Mr. Grove, “ we have said but little in this affair ; the offer, however,

on my cousin Alicia's part, is handsome; she has led Rosa's parents to a conclusion, that she would at some time or other do a little matter for their daughter; and who could expect, after the expensive breeding she has given her, but that she would make some suitable provision for the young lady some day?"

"Well, Master Grove, in regard to the quarrel between you and your tenant, you may tell John Braids I have found the old land-mark; he has cut half an acre too much; when the hay is made, you had best part it between ye: he's a noisy scoundrel; if he had said five more words to me I would have kicked the rascal into the ditch. Tell your bailiff to take one of the stone land-marks I sent you, and put it in the place of the wooden one, in the presence of two or three witnesses, if he can find any with eyes enough in their heads to see a land-mark by day-light: bid him take John Braids along with him that he may see himself righted: wooden land-marks

are bad things; bid your bailiff look what number you have, and I will give an order for stone: we have had no brangles among my brother's tenants since the wooden land-marks have been dug up." "Thankyou, Mr. Bartholomew, stone boundary marks are certainly the best; I should be glad to see one of them." "My wife dines with Madam here to day, I think," quoth Old Crab; "John Mathers is coming this way with a waggon; he shall bring my wife and the land-mark together, and then you may see both," said he, raising his left shoulder a little, as was Old Crab's way when he cracked one of his jokes. "Well, Master Grove, your humble servant; I must go and see what the old gentlewoman wants at Spade-oak; and will come and eat a bit of boiled beef with you by and by. You have a round of Old Bob, the great ox, Madam tells me, for dinner, to day; he comes of a noble family, Master Grove; I bought his great grandfather and grandmother,

in Northamptonshire, fourteen years ago come next Candlemas. I walked into your larder this morning, while Madam was making the tea, and looked at the meat." Mr. Grove made his bow and his smile in silence to Old Crab, who marched out of the room, and shook Mr. Grove and his furniture at every step. Upon this Old Crab mounted Old Crop, who gave a groan upon receiving such a vast load upon her back, and, putting herself into her usual trot, bore Old Crab safe to Spade-oak. Old Crop had been grieved of late with a tetter in her tail, which had eaten all the hair off it, except a bunch at the end, which she cocked up in a very comical manner when she fell into a trot. The turret clock struck one when Old Crab rode up to the door at Spade-oak: seeing him, Rosa ran out, and, putting her hand on Old Crop's neck, burst into tears. "Heigh-day!" quoth Old Crab; "what's the matter with you? fell out with your sweetheart, or what?" Rosa,

who, be her faults what they might, was very sincere and very warm in all her attachments, could not tell Old Crab that her aunt was taken ill some time, for crying. Dr. Grosvenour, the physician, came out at that moment, who had come to see Lady Alicia. "Well Doctor," said Old Crab, "how's your patient?" "Why, Sir," said he, "her Ladyship is not young certainly, but all may be well yet; she has, however, some dangerous symptoms, which sometimes come to say the house is falling: her Ladyship is very anxious to see you; Mr. Elsmere is gone along the road to hasten you." "I came through the Bridle gates," quoth Old Crab, getting off Old Crop, "and did not meet him." He was now introduced by Rosa, and found Lady Alicia Grove resting on a sofa, and a piece of paper lying before her upon a small hand-table.

"My dear Rosa," said her Ladyship, "you must leave me and Mr. Decastro; I have a little business to transact with him." "Aye," said Old Crab, pointing

with his stick at the window, "there's your sweetheart coming; go and tell him I am here; you can do such an errand as that, I warrant." Lady Alicia then said, "The note which you received from me this morning has sufficiently explained matters to you, Mr. Decastro, and may save me the trouble of talking; but to recount the great benefits which I have received from your good advice and assistance, in many matters since I have lived in this neighbourhood, might imply a gratification on your part in acknowledgments for favours, when you have none other than the act itself of doing good to every body, and taking thanks from nobody." "I can't stay to hear you talk, Madam: you say, here, in this letter (taking one out of his pocket), that you want some advice about making a will; come to the point, if you please, hanging off only wastes time." "Well, Sir," said Lady Alicia, "this paper, then, shows what I would have done with my property if I should

die, and I think, from some symptoms I now feel, that my last day is at hand ;” saying which, her Ladyship wept. “ It is no matter, Madam,” quoth Old Crab, “ how soon or how late the last day falls, if people are ready for it; we should live as if every day were the last day.—Let me see,” said he, putting on his spectacles, and taking up the paper :—and having read it ; “ Well, Madam, you are to do what you will with your property. I am appointed executor I find here, trustee, and guardian, to this girl (meaning Rosa), till she comes of age ; you have not forgot she has a father alive ?” “ No, I have not, Sir,” said she ; “ but I have my reasons for what I have done; and if you will grant this my last request, I—I—” the poor lady could scarce speak for tears—“ I shall leave this world at heart’s-ease. Smith’s a book-worm ; he knows nothing about these matters : I named you in this office, and he said I could not find a better man.” “ Set your mind at rest, set your mind at rest,

I'll see to matters," quoth Old Crab ;
" the will shall be ready by twelve
o'clock to-morrow ; get three witnesses
ready against I come." Upon which he
arose, and was going away, when she
said, " You are, Sir, the clergyman of
this place—I feel an inclination—" here
she hesitated—" Aye, aye," said he, " I
will administer the sacrament and read
the prayers when I come to-morrow."
" Yes, Sir," said Lady Alicia, " I should
be happy to receive these comforts. It
is now late, I fear, but I would have
some little advice upon these things."
" Late !" quoth Old Crab ; " aye, I
wonder what folks of your class in life
think they came into the world for ; ye
live as if no account were to be made,
and die as if the soul were addled in the
body. But it is of no use to talk, and to
ask for advice when you don't expect to
live to follow it, and would not if you
did. However, we can't tell how matters
may be ; you may live these ten years
for any thing I know ; if you do, come

to church o'Sundays, if the best part of the business be to set a good example. Such folks as you are stared at in the world, and as asses and fools have all souls to be saved, if they must stare at you, they might as well stare at you in church as shut their eyes and go to sleep in it. Send one of your gold-laced scoundrels home with me; I have writ a sermon for next Sunday that will suit your case: it is the best advice that I can give, and will save hacking, and hewing, and stammering here extempore."

Saying which, Old Crab marched out of the room, mounted Old Crop, and rode home to put her Ladyship's will into buckle. Folks stared at Old Crab as he went home to see such a gay servant behind him, mounted on a beautiful horse—('twas a wonder Old Crop did not lose her heart)—mounted on a beautiful horse, in a scarlet livery edged with gold, two broad golden epaulettes on his shoulders, and a gold band round his

hat, as broad as the girth of a pack-saddle. Old Crab never put his hand to his hat so often on any road before in his life. How civil folks are to a bit of gold lace!

Old Comical stood ready at the porch to receive Old Crab's nag, with a broad grin upon his face, and one wing of his nose hitched up towards his left eye; and, verily, his heart waxed merry at the sight of Old Crab's gay attendant. "What are you sniggering at, ye block-head," quoth Old Crab, turning about to follow Old Comical's eye: it was the first time he had seen what had followed him; for he very seldom looked behind him on the road; and he could hardly help laughing when he recollected the vast number of hats that had been pulled off to his Honour, on his way from Spadeoak to the farm. "Take this young man's horse, John," quoth Old Crab to Old Comical; "and when you have taken care of the horse, come in and take care of the rider," giving the key of the

strong beer cellar into Old Comical's hand. Upon which Old Crab went into his study to look for his sermon, a maiden discourse, for the next Sunday; and, when her Ladyship's servant had eaten and drank of the best the house afforded. "Come here, you rascal!" quoth Old Crab; "take this parcel to your mistress and tell her to have it ready for me to put into my pocket again, when I come to-morrow; go and bring out the man's horse, John." No man had less pride than Old Comical, though he says it that ought not to say it: if you poured a kettle of boiling water over him you could not scald him in that part; yet he put his dignity on at times, and wore it, like his best coat, on high days and holy days, and would strut and cry "hem!" to let folks know whereabouts a great man stood.

But you will soon see him in all his glory, reader; so we must lay him up in lavender, at present.—"John," quoth Old Crab, "bring out the young man's

horse!" Whereupon Old Comical led the servant's horse to the *upping-stock*, and held the stirrup for the servant's foot with much humility. When great men condescend to do little things, they become little things, to make little things great things. Well, now what comes next?—Why now, reader, we must proceed to give some account of the death of Rosa's aunt, Lady Alicia Grove, one of the gayest ladies of her time; and whether you looked at her beauty, or her riches, you took a star into your telescope of no common diameter: but now she was dropping on the horizon's edge, to rise again it is true; but there were doubts if she would shine in heaven. She told Old Crab, however, when he came to read prayers by her, that she was sorry for many things which she had done, and for many things which she had not done. Old Crab said, if a malefactor begged pardon at the foot of the gallows, it was the best thing he could do, and all he

could do, at such a time; but how such petition would be accepted, or what chance it had of being at all accepted, it was no more for him to say than it was in his power to say. Lady Alicia's end, however, was a very miserable one. She would suffer none to remain in the room with her, at her last moments, but Old Crab. "Go," said she, to Mr. and Mrs. Grove, and other her relations; "go, and leave me awhile with my clergyman." She then recounted to him a life of follies, errors, and even crimes; and, amongst other things, she asked him what he thought of the children which she had been the mother of? "Were they by one man, Madam," said he, "or more?" "By one only," she said, "but there are other things—" and here her voice was drowned in tears:—"I have made two or three married women miserable: oh! if I could but know that I should sink into nothing when I die, I were happy!—But to think of that bar of justice, which you

have spoken of, to be called to make my deposition; and by one who knows, before I speak the truth, what is the truth—where there can be no patching and painting of faults; no mask to show a false face, and hide a true one—is more dreadful to me than to hang upon a precipice by a slight bough.” “Look you, Madam,” quoth Old Crab, “what merits you may have to hold by, or what faults to pull you down, should be, with you, as with every body, a matter of daily meditation; it is the duty of all to look into their accounts! Death, when he comes, must find our house ready to receive him; and all things in order, or we cannot give him welcome. The fool knows this, that he must one day die; but, what day, is hidden even from the wise: here the wise man and the fool stand on even ground; but the wise, even out of his ignorance, draws wise advice, and doubles his guard against what he knows will come; and for this very reason, because he does not know

when it will come. It were well if such as lived like the beasts, and without a beast's excuse, could die like the beasts, and make an end there, like the beasts that perish. But they that have a light, and will not walk by it, have no better excuse than a man who puts out his candle, and then comes to some mischief in the dark. I am amazed at the lives of some of your rank and order ; ye live as if an end were not to come ; as if order were given that your sun should stand still ; as if your day should never have a night-fall : ye live in the apartments of the rich, as if ye were not to go with the poor into the grave. Riches get into people's eyes like dust ; or what reason can one give for the blunders which they commit, their follies, and their extravagancies, if they are not by these, or other means, struck blind ? In regard to yourself, your time may be, or may not be, short : at most it cannot now be long ; and it is wise to act as if it were the shortest. You must ask

pardon for what you have done wrong: how you came to do wrong, and knew that it was wrong, is another matter. It were better, perhaps, since you did, that you had done wrong without knowing it; but it is done, and remains to be repented of: pardon must be asked, not as if it were your due, but as if punishment were your due instead of pardon. You rich folks cannot expect to buy yourselves into Heaven, at your death, after you have laid out your money with the devil all your lives; for if ye build poor-houses, and hospitals, as high as the tower of Babel, you'll be mistaken if ye expect to step off their tops into Heaven.

“But you are to do what you please with your money; I will take care, since I must needs be put in office, that the alms-houses shall be built at the least expense, and in the most substantial manner, and will look to Spicer's farm, that it be made the best of for the endowment. Why don't you leave the

estates here to Smith at once, if you think the property ought to come back again into the family? I always suspected some foul play in the purchase between you and that profligate scoundrel his father; some value already received, Madam; or you would not have got so cheap a bargain." Lady Alicia answered with a deep sob, and said, "Your suspicions are too just, Sir, in that matter: I sincerely beg pardon of Heaven for what passed between me and Mr. Smith's father on that occasion; and, by way of atonement for my guilt, I have made his daughter heiress to the whole estate.—Spicer's farm, you know, I bought of Mr. Dodd. My reason for leaving this estate to his daughter is a very sad affair; but the secret will die with me. My mind is loaded with miseries—if I must die now, I shall die, of all women, the most wretched!" "Well!" said Old Crab, "if she must have it she must have it; I know nothing of your reasons; the jade will be her own

mistress in a few months, and then I must wash my hands of her. I'll take care, however, that she shall do no mischief while she is under my control. If a match is to be made between her and old Elsmere's son, of Lochabar, the sooner the better ; he is a steady lad, the Doctor says, and may tie her up, and the property too, which all lies at her mercy, here, in the will. To tell you a piece of my mind, Madam, somebody should be appointed to take care of the property :—it is madness to throw the bridle upon the neck of such a galloping hussey !” “ Well, Sir,” said her Ladyship, “ if I live, the command will be still mine ; if I die, the command will be yours, until she is married ; the day of her marriage being fixed at two months' end from this time. Young Elsmere is to return to Scotland, to prepare matters there, next week ; and she is going to visit her father and mother, and to lay this affair before them : the

letter, * which now lies upon my table, is written to explain all matters to the Smiths."

"I know nothing about fixed days, not I," quoth Old Crab; if you die, she may run loose when I am forced by the law to cut the string; she has had four or five dangling after her already, and she has jilted them all: she may serve Elsmere's son the same sauce; as matters now lie, he will not be the first goose she has roasted." "I know her heart was not engaged till now, Sir," said her Ladyship. "Well, well," said Old Crab, "you've asked me for my advice, and I have given it: it is a thing oftener given than taken; and the best advice is usually the worst received. If you had followed the advice I gave ye twenty years ago, when I met you in my brother John's mad-house, in London, it had been better for your con-

* It is not known if this letter was ever delivered.

science, Madam, when you tossed up your head like a prancing horse, and bade the parson remember he had not brought his pulpit into Grosvenor-square with him ! Times are turned about, Madam ; and you have sent for the parson, at last, when you are not quite so much in the humour to laugh at him."

" I am sorry to say, Sir," said she, " that I too well deserve these reproaches : publish my sad example to the world, that even those things which I have done amiss may be of use to others. In regard to my will, I am come to a determination that it shall remain as it is ; I have my private reasons for many things in it, which I shall reveal to none ; and I wish, now, before I grow weaker, as I feel I do every minute, to execute it." The witnesses were now called into the room, when Mr. Grove, of Hindermark, Mr. George Grove, his son, Mr. Elsmere, and Mr. Decastro, of Oaken Grove, came in and attested the signature.

The exertion, both of body and mind, for it was with difficulty she could be held up to sign the paper, disturbed her Ladyship so much that she fainted away as soon as she had written her name. Her last moment now drew near; she recovered, however, and again sent for Old Crab, who had left her, as one dead, in the hands of Dr. Grosvenour, her physician. Waving her hand for all others to leave the apartment, "Perhaps, Mr. Decastro," said her Ladyship, "I may never see you again: accept, therefore, my best thanks for all your services and good advice; which, though too often neglected, has my most cordial acknowledgments.—Oh! Sir," said she, with a convulsive start, "I dread the thought of death! yet, as I think, I am dying now! Give me some comfort, Sir; my head is distracted, and my heart is torn within me! If you did but know how my memory is loaded with the guilt and follies of my life—oh! too light a name for things so heavy as my

faults! If you did but know—mercy! mercy! kind Heaven! I am dying now! —Oh! pray for me—try what can be done for me—I am going!—Oh! save me!—save me!”—Saying which, she clung round Old Crab’s arm; and, with a convulsive start, threw herself into his bosom, as he sat near her on the sofa, and yielded up the ghost. Thus ended the mortal career of one of the most celebrated beauties England ever produced.

CHAP. VII.

Lady Alicia Grove's Funeral : Elsmere and Rosa take leave of each other : Old Crab and Rosa arrive in London.

THE remains of Lady Alicia Grove were deposited in the family vault at Hindermark : and Old Crab, by her particular desire, read the burial service, and preached a sermon, written by him on the occasion. This sermon would have appeared in this work ; but the relations of the deceased objected to its being printed. It was one of the most furious and bitter satires on the vices and follies of the superior classes in society that ever was written : we are not permitted to say any thing more of it. A great many people of the first rank were present at the ceremony ; and Old Crab hurled his thunderbolts amongst them, with all his vengeance, for the space of three quarters of an hour. The funeral

was a very grand one ; and the monument erected to her Ladyship's memory extremely superb. Mr. Grove, of Hindermark, by her Ladyship's order, it seems, offered Old Crab a hundred guineas for performing the ceremony, of which he would not receive one farthing: it was so much the better for the poor Curate of Hindermark ; who, having none of Old Crab's scruples about him, made a low bow, and put the money into his breeches pocket. Old Crab had something very unnatural in him not to like money better ; but, whatever else he was intended for, he certainly was not born to pick people's pockets ! He came down, as hot as a thunderstone from the clouds, out of the pulpit, and fell without mercy upon some of Mr. Grove's party, for whispering together in the church. He objected to the grandeur of Lady Alicia's monument ; and asked how long her pride should survive her body ? why the plague her vanity should be made immortal after her

flesh and bones were rotten? It was some time before he would suffer the sculptured marble to enter his church (the living was given him by Mr. Grove), objecting to the costly grandeur of the work, and the encomium it held out upon the deceased. He said it was amazing to him that people should be suffered to tell such scandalous lies in the church, and not be content unless they were graven in stone; that it did very little credit to the living to expend so much money to lay such loads of human grandeur on the dead. One said, "The statuary must live." "Better rot," said he, "than to be so ill employed.— Carry it in," said he, at last, "the lie can do no mischief, as long as every body knows the truth: in the epitaphs of great folks, it is very well known that great lies must be told; and there's no harm done, I warrant, as long as the lie is honestly paid for."

Well, reader, thus ended the earthly march of Lady Alicia Grove, a brief

account of whose life take as follows :

***** (N. B. *A dozen leaves were cut out of the work, in this place, by the order of the family*). Now, pretty reader, if wit and beauty come to you from Heaven, take warning by this star, which sets before you, that there is no shining, in this world, but by those rays which are borrowed from religion and virtue.

But of these things thus far.—Old Crab was now preparing to go to London on a variety of business, as usual ; part of which was to administer to Lady Alicia's will : and Rosa took the opportunity of going along with him, in order to visit her father and mother ; but, as her aunt was dead, and she would in a short time become her own mistress, she came to a mind to keep her attachment to Mr. Elsmere a secret at present, as well as the death of her aunt. Mr. Smith, not having determined on the sale of his property at this time, Old Crab, having transacted all his business

in town, returned into the north without paying Mr. Smith a visit; and Rosa spent a little time in London with Lord Beamystar's family, where she began to forelay her ground for the grandeur of her future establishment. She gave orders for a new carriage; hired servants, and bought horses; and she, with her friend, Lady Euthelia Ray, amused themselves in driving from shop to shop, upon a thousand delightful errands.

Now, reader, stick a bough in the ground, to show how far we have measured; and let us step back, with our chain, to a little angle which we have omitted in the field-plot. It is the farewell of Elsmere and Rosa, before they parted at Spade-oak, when he returned into Scotland, and she came with Old Crab to London. The smart box in the ear, which Rosa gave her lover, was so far welcome to him, as it mortified his flesh without knocking his brains out: all the harm done was a tingling on both sides, videlicet, in Elsmere's ear, and

Rosa's fingers. When next they met, he did not look as if his head was beaten off his shoulders; and for this reason, viz. because it remained on the very same shoulders as before; or, as great scholars love to speak, in *statu quo ante bellum*: if his head had been knocked off his shoulders, and on upon another man's, it had altered the case. But, although this very often happens, when the ladies have a mind to lay about them in good earnest, Rosa, whatever she might think of another man's shoulders, preferred Elsmere's head upon his own.

After the great knock upon record, Elsmere went one way, and Rosa another, which comes after collision of two hard bodies, according to Sir Isaac Newton's philosophical account of the matter, as stated in his *Opus Magnum*, his *Principia*. Whether Sir Isaac had felt the amazing force of a lady's hand slap-bang upon the drum of his ear, we know not; only this we can tell, that he writes upon the matter quite as well as if he

had. After the said knock, Elsmere and Rosa did not approximate one another's orbits until dinner time; and, if Lady Alicia had set out her sumptuous table in the sky, it were odds that the first two planets that had smelt such a good dinner, had approximated also. It was the cause, however, of Elsmere and Rosa's appulse; and they looked at one another as if they had no objection to come nearer. Lady Alicia retired to take her nap after dinner, when stomach's full bones will be resting—Lady Alicia retired to take her nap after dinner, and left the lovers together, who were not quite so sleepy. Elsmere was silent; in deep meditation, perhaps, upon the vast concussion aforesaid, which might have shaken his soul upon her seat on the pineal gland, or thrown her off her bench.—But Rosa's rattling tongue began to run; for, whatever else she wanted, she never wanted words; she had plenty of that sort of ready money. “Mr. Elsmere,” said she,

with a fond look, for which her delightful eyes were made on purpose, "I must beg your pardon for a little haste to-day, in the shrubbery; I hope, sincerely, no harm came of it: I have blamed myself ever since it happened; but you must own that you were a little saucy." This was said with a peculiar sort of smile, which would have instructed some men what advantage to have made of a lady's lips upon the occasion. We cannot dive into people's thoughts always; but Rosa, at that moment, when she drew her lips into this odd smile, looked for all the world as if she wanted to kiss and be friends. But Elsmere was not in a very heroic pin at that moment, whether he took the hint or not—if any hint was meant, which we will not venture to say, for fear we should pay Rosa a compliment which she might not deserve; for it was very kind-hearted in her, if she had a mind to make matters up with a kiss:—the hero, however, lay at that moment asleep in Elsmere; and

he judged it prudent, like an able general, not to make an attack upon disadvantageous ground. "My dear Miss Smith," said Elsmere, "I really did not mean the least offence in what I said; you took the matter by the wrong hand. We have both passions implanted in our natures, with which it is our duty, morally speaking, to contend: reason, that should head and lead on our forces in these conflicts, sometimes deserts her post."

"You thought me a little mad, then, Mr. Elsmere," said she, interrupting him. "Why," said he, "reason may be suspended without being lost, as life in a drowning person may be suspended, and not be extinguished. But it is our duty, my dear Miss Smith, to contest the matter with these our passions; they are the enemies of our soul with which we must fight; foes to our happiness, and disturbers of our peace: but I find we must not undervalue their forces, and venture too far into the field with them

without securing our retreat. When I kissed you, my dear Miss Smith, the other day, it was done by way of an experiment in this very matter, to try the strength of the foe: if I had repeated it, I had lost the day; but I was constrained to a hasty retreat, or reason had been subdued; and I, a conquered wretch, been left to repent my rashness." What to make of such a salute as this, Rosa really did not know; and she thought she had got one of the oddest lovers that any lady ever had in the world: but she loved him, for all that, with the most sincere affection, and with all her heart: she knew that his principles were very good, and had no objection to put up with a few extravagances, which, at a proper opportunity, she thought she should laugh away. He had like to have got another box on the ear though, a little after this. "In regard to that matter," said he, meaning the salute in the shrubbery, "I know that you, my dear Miss Smith, by nature like kissing as

well as I do—matters abstractedly considered.” Rosa, who sat in the next chair to him, put on a very angry frown, and raised her hand ;—he caught it, and held the pretty arm fast in his own. When her left hand came to help her right hand out, he caught that also, and made poor Rosa so far his prisoner : it was unladylike to kick or to spit ; and to bite would have been like a dog or a cat ; so all she could do was to blush for revenge.

“ My dear Miss Smith,” said he, “ can we not speak calmly upon these things together ; surely the engagements which we have entered into may bear us out in discussions which have the welfare of both our souls for their object. We must teach one another how to despise these things, these childish toys, on our way to perfection on earth, which I think may be attained by us both if we take pains, and the proper means, in order to it.” Rosa struggled for her liberty, blushed and tried to speak, but only made a

sputter instead of a speech. He held her fast by her arms till she complained that he hurt her, when he instantly released his snowy prisoners, and Rosa burst into tears. Elsmere had a nice soft voice, and a way with him soothing beyond description; so soft, that, what with his fine eyes, that looked suffused with sorrow for having offended her, and his kind expressions, Rosa found in her heart that she could not hate and love him at the same time. "My dearest Rosa," said he—it was the first time he had ever called her so—taking one of her hands that came a willing prisoner into his—"My dearest Rosa, I have as yet many faults—faults which you must forgive and pity; I love you," said he, raising his eyes to hers, "O in this heart I do! do you love me in yours, my Rosa?" Now this was very pretty, and something like what a lover ought to say to his mistress. Rosa smiled, and blushed, and said—What would you have said, fair reader, if you had been in Rosa's charming

situation?—"Yes."—Well, this pretty talk befell after dinner at Spade-oak, when the old lady—ah! how the old cats know what the kittens love!—when the old lady left Rosa and Elsmere together—so Rosa picked out a peach, soft and melting like herself, for Elsmere, and he a nectarine, blushing like his love. So he eat his peach, and she eat her nectarine, and they never tasted any thing sweeter in all their lives. The next day they parted with the most faithful interchange of promises, to be true to each other; and Elsmere made Rosa confess, with a pretty blush, that she would be ready to marry him as soon as their friends chose to fix the day.

All this happened some time before Lady Alicia's death, and several delightful letters had passed between Elsmere and Rosa before that awful event took place. Well, now reader, like good economists, having made both ends meet, we will, if you please, return to the affairs of Mr. and Mrs. Smith in the next

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chapter. Genevieve, who was sitting at our desk while we were writing this, and following our pen with her starry eyes, "John," said she, "give me the pen, and let me say what we thought of Mr. Elsmere amongst ourselves." So Beauty* took the pen, and we went out into Old Crab's farm-yard; for this passage passed at the farm—we went out the while into Old Crab's farm-yard and fed the pigs.

Mrs. Acerbus Decastro takes the Pen.

I am afraid I shall make but a bad hand of it in print, reader, and you will lament the absence of our merry friend, Old Comical; but after you have read my dull stuff, you will relish him better than ever. But I want sadly to tell you what we ladies at Oaken Grove had to say of Mr. Elsmere, which we must know best, when we talked him all over by ourselves. Well then, indeed reader, Mr.

* Mrs. Acerbus Decastro; always called so by Old Comical.

Elsmere was what I call a very nice young man; he had a dark but beautiful face, with a good deal of beard, and a rosy colour, at times; but I liked him best when he looked a little pale, and then I never saw any countenance that came so directly to one's heart. Don't think I am in love with him; my dear Acerbus himself has nothing to fear on that score; but I will confess that Elsmere is a man whom I could love, and do love, at this moment most heartily as a friend. A more worthy creature cannot exist. His height is five feet ten inches, very finely made, and has one of the handsomest legs in the world. But I must go back to the time of the History, and not speak in the present tense in this manner—I shall make fifty blunders before I have done—Indeed, reader, Elsmere was a very nice young man, but too grave and melancholy at times; and whenever I talked with him, he always complained of his sins: I would laugh and tell him I wished I were as good as

he, and that very few young men were so good, and that Rosa was a happy girl to attract his attention. Julia said, (that is, Mrs. George Grove, reader—perhaps you have not read the first volume of the work,) Julia said he was too cold for a lover, but Rosa herself positively denied that—and she ought to know best. I said he was cold to others, but kept all his warmth (for such eyes as Elsmere's told how warm his heart was) for his Rosa. Mrs. Decastro and Lady St. Veal said, religion was his mistress, and if they were Rosa they should be jealous of every church steeple in the neighbourhood. Lady Euthelia Ray said, he loved religion, because the ceremony that was to unite him to his Rosa belonged to it. Mrs. Grove, of Hindermark, tied a bit of string in a hard knot to show how Rosa and Elsmere were tied together in mutual affection, a knot which could not be easily untied. I said one day, "Mr. Elsmere, you hate Rosa, I know very well." He took up

one of my pretty twins that lay playing in my lap, and asked me how well I loved it? I took it and kissed it—"Aye," said he, with a fine smile, "I love Rosa as well as you love your little Tiney." It was the least of my two babes, and I used to call it Tiney. Well, reader, how d'ye like me? don't you think I look like an historian? But I'll be hanged if I know what to say next though! We think Mr. Elsmere very aly, and that he pretends to be more religious than he is: I told him so one day, and I'll be hanged if the tears did not come into his eyes. I told him I was sure he would make Rosa a good husband: he said, he would try to do so; but he could not count five pennies upon himself. I threw down a sixpence, and said I knew his value better; this set him a laughing: he looks charmingly when he laughs—he has such nice lips and teeth. "Rosa," said I, one day, "don't you think your sweetheart has a very pretty mouth?" She said, "*Pish!*" and

gave me a comical touch with one of her elbows. "Ah Rosa!" said I, "I know what you are thinking about!"—"No! but you don't though, you fool," said she. We were in the drawing-room at my uncle's, and the ladies—there were a dozen of us—all fell a laughing, and Rosa blushed like vermilion. I think you are almost tired of me, reader, and I have got such a horrid pen! Now I would give the world at this moment to see what I have written in print. I'll plague Old Comical, and Old Solid, night and day, till they have finished this part of the work, that I may see how I look in print.

CHAP. VIII.

Further Accounts of Mr. and Mrs. Smith: Mr. Smith's Determination to sell his Estate and leave the Neighbourhood.

NOW, reader, if you please, we must travel southward, and revisit Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and their broken neighbourhood; for you may recollect that Rosa fell upon it, like a great stone on a platter, and broke it all to pieces. Now the sins of the child, as we observed some time ago, were visited upon the parents, and Mr. and Mrs. Smith got insulted by the low, as well as they had been by the high, in their village. Mr. Smith, who was an example of patience and forbearance, bore all with that sort of temper which is one of the greatest ornaments of human nature, the meek and quiet spirit condemned by the world on account of its excellency. Mrs. Smith,

who dealt as much in fire as he did in cold water, rejoiced at all the havoc Rosa had made in this place, and called people's sufferings, judgments that came down from Heaven; and was glad that her daughter was made the instrument of vengeance; and every furious stroke she struck, touched her heart with the rapture of revenge. Mrs. Smith, however, it must be said, was for the most part a good wife, a good mother, and a good mistress, save and except that she would box little Tim the footboy's ears, sometimes, when he did what he ought to do, and would give him a penny when he did what he ought not. Rosa, who had a spice of old cinnamon, was in some things perfumed by her mother's essences, impatient of affronts and insults, and loved revenge as a crow loves carrion.

Not one in this family could now venture into the street without being guarded by some of Rosa's servants. Mr. Smith was now, as we have said, fully determined to sell his estate to Mr. Grove,

had communicated his intentions, and we were dispatched into the south, by Old Crab, to get all matters ready for his arrival in these parts. Taking Mr. and Mrs. Smith's conduct, reader, into consideration, we confess we do not think them quite blameless, setting Rosa on a shelf by herself : people of small fortunes ought not to court too much an acquaintance with the great. Mrs. Smith, who rode her husband with pretty sharp spurs, was certainly too urgent with him to visit fine folks, and was not content unless they paid visit for visit, a thing which could not well be expected by people of so little note and property ; for visits are not paid so much to the man as to the money, whom the Roman satirist very well calls the queen of the earth. It is a good rule for every man to sit in his own place ; if he leaves his chair for one that is made for a man with longer legs than himself, folks will laugh, and give him a push, some on one side and some on another, until they get him out,

or overturn him, chair and all, for the amusement of his neighbours. Still we must say, on the other hand, that if a man be well bred and of good family, he deserves the respect of the greatest man in his parish, to whom what we have said of the Earl and Countess of Beamy-star may be worth a thought. This noble family showed a respect, nay even a regard, for all, and set such an example of good behaviour to all great people as, if followed, could not fail to gain esteem, and even love. The worthy Earl would often say, "If I am not upon good terms with my neighbours, I am not on good terms with myself: a gentleman always has my respect; a poor man my help: my rank in life makes my civilities acceptable in proportion to my superiority over those to whom I please to pay them. Nothing pleases me so much as to see a poor man address me without fear, or makes me lament my rank in life so much, as to hear that man stammer to me who can speak freely to my

inferior. I had rather be seen to come out of a poor man's house, than go into the mansions of the opulent. I had rather give my title to my dog, and call my spaniel by my name, than set it barking in people's ears to worry them out of their senses in my presence. I look for respect, and high respect too; but throw respect to the dogs, if it is not mixed with esteem." Now the Earl of Beamystar thanked Mr. Smith for his satire; and the rather, because it was written upon the vices of the great. You may remember, reader, he had published a satire on great people's faults, which brought him much odium in his neighbourhood. The Noble Earl defended it and its author against some in Mr. Smith's vicinity; and said, he was glad to find men of his rank corrected: he felt himself stung, he said; but thankful for what Mr. Smith had said, and would put his satire to the use for which its author had whetted it, and cut out what is unsound and cancerous in himself; a

wiser thing than to abuse a work which ought to be put to public use. We must beg leave to observe, that this was to act like a noble man. And he made some gentlemen in Mr. Smith's village heartily ashamed of themselves, when he called on Mr. Smith on purpose to thank him for his publication. It is sometimes prudent to praise what we cannot imitate, as it is wise not to condemn what it would be much better for us if we could. If they thought the satire was pointed with malice, acting as he did, they would have quenched the fiery dart: if written, as all satire ought to be, to mend people's lives and manners, not to take it in good part was to condemn themselves. But of this thus far.

Well, reader, your curiosity is now satisfied, and you can now account for Rosa's sad disappointment at the post-office, when the letter-sorter said there was no letter for her: you can guess, now, that she expected one from Mr. Elsmere; but why she did not receive

one still remains to be explained : but this meal's-meat is enough for your curiosity at present ; surfeits are bad things, and health comes of spare diet. From this time Rosa received no more letters from Mr. Elsmere ; and you may well imagine, fair reader, if you have got such a thing as a sweetheart, what the poor maiden must feel on such a sad occasion : the reason of this neglect on his part will be seen in its place. Poor Rosa's sun now rose and set in clouds ; and every morning when she left her bed, she left her pillow wet with her tears. Now, perhaps, you will say, reader, that it is not every shower of tears that makes pity spring up in our hearts, and the seeds must be in the soil before any such sweet fruit as that can come ; though Rosa, or any other young lady, cried her eyes out : this is true. Rosa's conduct of late has not sown many seeds of this sort in our minds, we fear ; and whatever else may spring up, Rosa cannot reasonably expect, at this



season, a very abundant crop of pity. When a man gets into a metaphor, it is very well if he can find his way out again : metaphors are like ditches ; when a poor fellow tries to get out of one he falls into another. We were talking about pity springing up in people's minds upon its being watered by Rosa's tears ; but pity may not be quite so vegetable a matter in her case. Rosa could not look for such a thing to grow out of what had passed : she had cultivated no ground for it. Well, reader, she has been at the post-house again ; for she went every day ; found no letter from Elsmere, came home, ran up stairs into her room, and flung herself upon her bed in a sad fit of grief : so, and there let her lie ; after all her malice and mischief, who cares where she lies ? Why, this may be said, she does not cry because she is sorry that she has done mischief, but because she has received no letter from her sweetheart ; and you may think, reader, she does not deserve any such nice thing

after the pretty tricks she has played in her father's neighbourhood. Young Twinkle, of all her lovers in it, stuck the closest to her. Her talk with him, a few days before the fatal duel between him and young Preston, was a spur rather than a check to his pursuit ; but she had managed matters with so much art that he could insist upon nothing : she had carried her point with him without making him any promises, and fooled him still with ambiguities until he grew so troublesome that she came to a mind to try a quarrel with him to get rid of him.

Meeting him one day at the Swan, she put herself in the way, and he told her that he wished to speak to her, when the following conversation took place. " If it is possible, Miss Smith," said he, " for one of your turn to know such a thing as one serious moment, I earnestly beg that it may be the present : in regard to myself, I think I never was more serious in my life." " Well, very serious Sir," said Rosa, " what has your serious-

ness got to say in so serious a moment?"

"The inextinguishable regard and love which burn in my bosom," said he—

Rosa jumped up, and cried out, "Fire!

fire! fire!" "One moment, my dearest

Madam, let me beg one moment, one

serious moment," said Mr. Twinkle;

"is it possible, Miss Smith, that you can

reflect an instant upon what is past, and

take no serious thought—" "O Sir,"

said Rosa, "you have been fighting and

have killed a man, what of that? there

is one coxcomb the less, and not quite

so many fools as there were; what of

that? Yes, Sir, you have shot at a fool's

head, and hit the mark, and pray, Sir,

what is that to me? I like you none

the better for being a good shot: you

may shoot long enough before you

wound me; you are not a shot good

enough for that, Mr. Popgun! You will

shoot a man through the head, and say I

killed him, ha, Sir? is that what I am

come here to have proved? If coxcombs

fall out and shoot one another because I

have a good shape or a pretty face, what have I to do with that? my face and my shape are none of my own making. I had rather be a crooked horn, and grow on a ram's forehead, than be a bone to be fought for by any two puppies in the universe!" Saying which Rosa fell a laughing.

"This is past all endurance, Madam," said Mr. Twinkle, in anger. "I hope it is," said she; "I beg we may quarrel and part. I should not care what I say, if we could but come to a quarrel. You know my father's mind, Sir, and my mother's too; and to tell you a piece of my own, I think you will be a great fool if you follow me any further: to be plain with you, I will never be yours but upon one condition." "Oh! my charming Miss Smith," said he in raptures, "what is that?" "Why," said she, "that you will hang yourself first, and leave your halter as a legacy to the rest of the coxcombs in the land, with advice to follow your example." "After what I have

gone through for your sake, Miss Smith," said he, "you cannot possess the common tenderness of your sex." "Tenderness!" cried Rosa, interrupting him, "if I showed you any I must have the heart of a tiger! The charity lies all on the other side to make you hate what you cannot get; I would be tender if I bore you malice, Sir; if I can but get you to detest me, I shall do you the greatest kindness in the world. A jest may do it; let another take you, and live at the sign of the ass's head." "I will bear these insults no longer, by Heavens!" said he. Rosa, laughing in his face, said, "This is just as I would have it; let anger once get love's place in you, my dear Sir, and then you will hate me and be happy: fling about as you please, you cannot make me a better friend than by quarrelling with me. I shall never love you until I am sure you hate me; so, if you have a mind to win my heart, you know the conditions—good day to you:" saying which, she

ran out of the room, and left the young gentleman to his meditations.

Rosa, you see, reader, played the jilt upon sure grounds. Her affections were already fixed upon young Elsmere; she felt the full force of love herself, and knew the full extent of the torment which she caused in others, by which lucky circumstance none of the sweets of revenge were lost. We fear, reader, you will think that Rosa did not deserve young Elsmere's heart; under cover of whose love she could thus torture those of others, without any danger to her own.

CHAP. IX.

Old Comical arrives in the Village of Three Stars : some Account of his Wife : he is seized for Debt : John Stiff pinned by the Throat : the Wig and the old Sow. Old Comical goes to Church.

IF one pair of spurs will make a horse gallop, what a monstrous rate he would go at with three pair at once ! He certainly ought to go three times as fast. Mr. Smith was now ready saddled for his departure into the north ; and, moreover, he had a few kicking devils on his back, each armed with spurs, as follow. First spur, a sharp desire to get into his native and beloved mansion, old Spade-oak ; the second spur as sharp, a desire to get out of a place where he had received so many insults ; which make one pair of spurs : then a pricking desire to oblige his cousin, Mr. Grove of Hindermark, with the purchase of his estate, a

third spur; then a pungent appetite to get into a neighbourhood where he would be visited, loved, and respected, by all, which made a fourth spur; here are two pair of spurs already: a fifth spur was, and that a piercer, the love he bore his daughter Rosa, and the fears which now goaded his mind for her safety; and a sixth spur, which stabbed him like an axis of spits, was the tongue of his wife, that lacerated his flesh, and tore his arteries open without mercy or remorse to worry him out of the village of Three Stars. These, reader, made three pair of spurs altogether. Upon the sharp points of all which motives, all matters had come, full gallop, to a conclusion, by frequent letters then and there written, thereunto tending and bearing, to Mr. Grove, of Hindermark, and from the said Mr. Grove to Mr. Smith, under the eye and direction of Mr. Bartholomew Decastro, or, as we have always been used to call him behind his back, Old Crab. One moment, reader, if you

please—there is an expression that wants the file on the last page ;—we must just turn our hand and give it a touch ; we saw you make a wry mouth at it as you passed—Get on, get on ; no matter, no matter ; file, a dog's leg and a cow's tail, &c.

Very well, reader ; now it came to pass that Old Crab said to Old Comical—throwing open the casement of his little parlour, which looked out full amongst all the rogues and rascals in the farm-yard—now it came to pass that Old Crab called to Old Comical—with his hand raised over his eyes, to keep the sun out—that Old Crab called to Old Comical, and said, in a loud voice, “ John ! ” Whereupon Old Comical, who was administering a little Pomade Divine to Old Crop's tail, galled sorely by her crupper, answered and said, “ Master, here am I.” “ Come in, and take orders,” quoth Old Crab : “ all matters are now settled between Master Grove and Master Smith, of Three Stars ; and

you must now get ready to go into the south." Upon which, Old Crab shut his little parlour window, and Old Comical washed his hands at the pump ; and, pulling off his shoes, which were dirty, he walked barefoot into Old Crab's little parlour, which was always kept as clean as a penny. Upon Old Comical making his appearance and his bow, which he always made upon coming into presence, Old Crab said, " This packet of papers must go to Master Smith ; you must get ready to go to-morrow. Go first to London, and give this letter to Peticraft, the attorney ; and then call at the Old Hummums, in Covent Garden, and bespeak my old room ; I shall follow you to London before Lady-day ; this, I think, is the sixth of March." Old Comical began counting : " Sunday three, Monday four, Tuesday five—yes, Master—Wednesday six : this is the sixth ; March, no miser of his time, has now spent six days out of thirty-one." " Then," quoth Old Crab, " it is time to be gone. All you

will have to do when you get there will be to measure the land, and take an account of the timber: the rest must be left to me. And if any piece of ground does not come easily under the chain, note it in your field-book, and, when I come, I will run the chain over it again. Touch the people upon an inclosure of the parish, and try how they stand for it; Master Grove will come heavy into the scale for it, when he has bought Smith's estate there. Here, take my land-chain and pegs; I know them to be correct. In regard to the timber, form the best estimate you can; and get every tree, that contains ten feet and upwards, marked and numbered. I will send Smith a letter when I come to London."

"How's the old mare's tail, John?"
"It is better than it was," quoth Old Comical, "that bit of new leather sowed into the crupper, did all the mischief, Master; Old Crop has got such a way with her of brandishing her tail when she trots, you might look behind and see her

manner, that her dock never lies quiet in the crupper-loop; and this it is that frets her in the root, Master." "Come," quoth Old Crab, "you'll stand chattering here all day, if I encourage you: go along home directly, and get ready for your journey; you know your way?" "Yes, Master," quoth Old Comical, "I have been in the Village of Three Stars before to-day, and lay hard at bed and board with one John Stiff, a publican, for six weeks, and now stand upon the wall for more than a penny." "Why, you scoundrel," quoth Old Crab, "haven't you paid all your debts yet?" "Look you, Master," quoth Old Comical, "what a man steals nobody expects to be paid for; and that is the reason why a tradesman never enters such matters on his books; though the tradesmen in London, when fine folks carry things out of their shops, set their names down in their books notwithstanding: I myself saw a fine lady carry a gown out of a tradesman's house, one day; and the

shopman, instead of running after her, and stopping her, let her go quietly off with the goods, and contented himself with writing the matter down in his book. Now, if he had dashed out after her, and cried 'Stop thief,' he might have got his silk again—but as for the money—'sume my body, if I can tell how tradespeople get on in London; for, unless they steal in their turn—but perhaps they steal all round; and if every man steals what he wants out of his neighbour's house, there's no harm done, and every body has reason to be satisfied."

Old Crab's dinner now came in; and Old Comical, not being invited, went out, not like a candle for want of something to feed upon, for he had more than his master, but because he was now to get matters ready for his journey into the south. Now Old Comical was delighted at the thoughts of this journey, as he was like to see some of his old acquaintance; for, when he stole away

from the poor parson's house, and left him and others to grub Dr. Crambelly out of his grave ; he first settled, after his flight, at Master Stiff's, at the Swan, in the gay town of Three Stars, ate, drank, and slept, at mine host's expense, took a walk one day before he paid his bill, and left a world of chalk upon the wall.

To return to Mr. Smith's neighbourhood : Mr. and Mrs. Smith were now in daily expectation of Old Comical ; the state bed-chamber was got ready for him, for they were not sure Mrs. Mathers would not come with him ; and one reason why she did not come was, she lay in, at that time, at her seat at Dillies Puddle. A few words upon her—Mrs. Mathers' pride set out of the account, she was a very worthy woman, and made Old Comical a very good wife, who used to say that her flesh was worth a farthing a pound more than that of most women, taken rough as they run ; a pig-poker's phrase ; when he sells a lot of pigs

all together and no picking, he makes a bargain with the purchaser to take them "rough as they run." If Old Comical had been a shoemaker, and chosen his wife for the sake of her bristles, he might have furnished his cobbler's stall well with Madam Funny of Dillies Puddle; her hair was as strong as the boss of a turkey-cock: what's a pig's bristle? an awl must go first and introduce it: here the expense of awls had been saved; these bristles had found their way through cow's leather. Mrs. Mathers, her bristles notwithstanding, was caressed: all the ladies visited her, at first out of curiosity, and afterwards for the sake of her oddity: they were, however, agreeably surprised to find more of a gentlewoman in her than they expected; and Mrs. Mathers gave her dinners and her entertainments, in her turn, with the rest of the neighbourhood; and none of the great folks there were too great to accept her invitations. She smoked her pipe, in secret, over a bowl of half and

half, with Old Comical, notwithstanding ; but that was in a little parlour set apart for that purpose, so that the ladies never smoked Mrs. Mathers when they came to pay their visits, or smelled her tobacco. She was one of the blackest and the coarsest women ever seen in the kingdom of England ; but her features were good, and her face not unhandsome, notwithstanding she had a great deal of beard. Since she had married Old Comical, a handsome dining-room and drawing-room, surmounted with some good bed-chambers, had been added to her seat at Dillies Puddle, with a coach-house and stables ; forasmuch as Old Comical had long since become a man of substance, and his lady kept her carriage. She was a very odd specimen of the sex, but very good in her humour ; and, when she laughed, she always raised her left elbow and laughed in her sleeve. She diverted the ladies in the neighbourhood very much ; and when she and Old Comical were invited together, there was

always as much laughing in the drawing-room as there was in the dining-parlour. When she spoke to a servant, or other inferior person, she always held her nose fast between her finger and thumb, and this for majesty, lest her nose should take offence. She had a fault, as we have said; she was proud because her father was a Duke, not because her mother was a dairy-maid; and that was the reason, when low people came, she held her nose: let her pride, however, be what it would, a poor man never wanted her pity or her purse: and be Mrs. Mathers proud of what she may, she neither is, nor ever was, proud of her charity; she not only felt in her pocket but in her heart when she gave an alms. When Old Comical married her he put her to his account because she was an odd figure: her head grew as if it had taken huff at her left shoulder; and when she wanted to look at a matter on her left side, she was forced to turn half way round. She had a long neck; and,

when she drank, it went quattle, quattle, quattle. She had a foot like a candle-stick; for her heel reached as far one way as the plate of her foot, which was short, did the other; and her shoe was something like a fire-bucket. When she made a low curtsey, which she was very apt to do, she had a hard matter to come up again; a little heavy, perhaps, being a round fat woman: to one walking behind her she looked like a pair of bellows with their nose turned downwards, she was so rounded off at the shoulders, and gathered in at the small of the back; but then she broke out again at the hips, as wide as a coach-wheel; and when seated in a narrow armed chair, she has been known to stick in it, and get up chair and all; which gave Old Comical an occasion to say she was disorderly, and to call out Chair! chair!

She was very good-natured; and, laugh when you would, she would laugh too, and take all in good part. Old

Comical asked her for her picture, and she, to throw back the compliment, asked Old Comical for his ; but no painter has been found to this day that could draw either of them for laughing. Her eye was black, exceeding black, but fine, very fine ; she had one more eye, which, added up together, make two eyes in all, equally black and fine ; and she would sometimes wet them both, and then she waxed merry. She was proud, it is true, but had an excellent heart for all that ; and Old Crab said, let the weather be what it would, she never missed morning and evening services on a Sunday.

Such was, and such continues to be, our wife, reader, Madam Funstall once, in her virgin state, but now Mrs. Mathers, of Dillies Puddle, and mother of three children. To return from our little diversion upon Mrs. Mathers : Mr. and Mrs. Smith were now in expectation of Old Comical. And now it came to pass—the Lord Mayor passes sometimes—in came Old Comical into the town of

Three Stars, in a chariot and four, dressed in a new suit of blue superfine, spangled with yellow buttons, that shone like fixed stars in the firmament of his coat; and on his waistcoat's edge there shone, like fire, a gorgeous boundary of lace of gold! Yes! in he came upon a full gallop; in he came, smoking like Mount Vesuvius, with a pipe in his mouth, in the middle of a cloud of tobacco: in he came like a storm; the fire from his horses' heels was the lightning, the noise of his chariot wheels was the thunder, and the smoke which came out of his mouth rolled like night upon the darkened town!

"Drive into the swan, my little lads," quoth Old Comical to the post-boys, "*into the Swan*," quoth the echo from the walls of the parish church. Now it came to pass that the post-boys grinned, laid their leather into their foaming cattle, and down they rattled into the Swan yard, and set all the pebbles in a blaze! It was Sunday morning, to come down

to the almanac; and Mr. and Mrs. Stiff, host and hostess of the Swan, stood at the gate-way of the inn to show folks their best clothes, and how a gentleman and lady ought to be dressed on Sunday morning. A smile illuminated the system of their countenances, like a sun, when they beheld Old Comical make a fine bend towards the orifice of their house; and, to put on a clean metaphor, that smile was split into a grin, when the post-boys charged their gate-way upon a full gallop, whip in hand.

Chariot! What, did Old Comical come in his own carriage?—Chariot! Aye, reader; where could a man expect to find the Lord of the Manor of Cock-a-doodle? in a fish-cart? Aye, and a noble equipage it was, made by the first tool in London, all blue and gold, the colour of his waistcoat, with a golden cock upon his walk for his crest, and cock-a-doodle-doo for his motto! Now it followed—a cow's tail follows, as it is its place and office so to do in conse-

quence of the cow—now it followed that mine host of the Swan walked up to the gorgeous door of Old Comical's chariot, with his hat in his hand, cherubs playing on their golden lyres in his countenance, in the shape of smiles—that's a bold figure—his heart and arteries running at a pulse of one hundred and twenty, in a high fever of joy—we shall over-draw our banker—and the skin of his person in a profuse perspiration!

Now it came to pass—a dose of physic passes sometimes—now it came to pass that Master Stiff stretched forth his hand, which some have a way of doing when they would lay hold of any thing—now it came to pass—best begin again, to keep the limbs of the sentence all knit together—now it came to pass that Master Stiff stretched forth his hand to seize the silver hasp of the chariot door; when, upon opening the mouth of the chariot, Old Comical stared Master Stiff full in the face, and cried out, “How now, old acquaintance?” Ah! see what it is to

owe a man a bill ; and see what it is for that man to have a stomach full of gunpowder ! Can't you guess what's the matter, reader ? Old Comical, in his merry days, when others found meat and drink, and he found bowels to put them in ; when others found beds, and he taught mankind what a bed was made for ; when others found fire, and he warmed his nose thereat, and never paid one farthing for the billets ; in these merry days it befell that Old Comical put up at the hospitable Swan—kept, as well as the Swan, by the aforesaid John Stiff—lay at bed and board for six weeks together, was frightened at something one night, ran away, and never paid a farthing ! Now, when a man sticks a red-hot poker into a barrel of gunpowder, nine times in ten it will take fire and blow up. What the red-hot poker is to the gunpowder, Old Comical's red face was to the inflammable blood of Master Stiff : he took fire in a moment at it ; seized Old Comical by the collar like a

thunderbolt—thunderbolts take folks by the collar sometimes—and handed the Lord of the Manor of Cock-a-doodle out of his carriage, neck and heels! Yes, John Stiff seized Old Comical by the collar; Old Comical's collar, therefore, went first, and Old Comical followed it, into the Swan, when he and John Stiff began to grapple one another. There is a time when a man and his muscles may be taken off their guard, before they can muster their forces, and form the line of battle: at such a disadvantage was Old Comical seized by John Stiff; but, as soon as Old Comical got his strings in play, Old Comical soon let John Stiff know that there was as much difference between his sinews and John Stiff's strings, as there is between pack-thread and cart-ropes. Old Comical pinned John Stiff to the wall of the Swan, and John forthwith bare the countenance, reader, of a strangled cat; and his wig, to get out of harm's way, flew from his head to the ground. Now it came to

pass that luck ran against the wig: in came an old sow upon forage, and, smelling John Stiff's wig, well basted with dripping and flour for the day, seized the savoury matter in her hunger, ran off with John Stiff's wig, and the tail stuck out of the corner of her mouth.

But we left our host nailed, like an almanac, against the wall, who now held up his hand to acknowledge the conqueror. A signal for mercy, whether it came from a man's hand, his mouth, his stomach, or his bones, always turned an enemy into a friend with Old Comical: whereupon he took his hand from the spheropharangei of John Stiff; who, as soon as he could get wind to speak, spake as follows: to wit; "Pay me for what you robbed me of, you gold-laced scoundrel!" Now it befell that Mrs. Stiff, who had stept aside to serve an old maiden lady with a glass of brandy, returning, met the old sow with her husband's best wig in her mouth; and, not knowing whether she might not have

her husband, the said John Stiff, already in her stomach, ran into the Swan, in a fright, to see how much the sow had left her of her old man; for, though a man's head and his wig usually go together, her husband's head and wig might now be parted; the head be already gone down the old sow's throat, and the wig be left sticking in her teeth. In rushed Mrs. Stiff, into the Swan, by the first passage, and found her husband pinned to the wall, and his mouth open to get a little fresh air.

Some say that there is nothing got by a man's putting himself in a passion: this is not always true, for Master Stiff got his throat well pinched, and his bald pate knocked five or six times against the wall. Mrs. Stiff, when she saw it, was frightened at the sight; and, as no sound could come out of his throat, she squalled out for herself and him too. Now Old Comical, like a brave but courteous knight as any in romance or tale of old, withdrew his fury and his hand

from John Stiff's weasand, upon the signal for quarter; and upon the elastic hoops of his throat recoiling back again into their places, gave passage to the abusive words aforesaid, "Pay me for what you robbed me of, you gold-laced scoundrel!" But Old Comical, like a valiant conqueror, regarded words but as wind, put his hand into his pocket, like a man of true metal, and Master Stiff heard the coin ring a merry peal in his purse.

"Make out your account for bed and board," quoth Old Comical, taking a step towards John Stiff, who took a step back, for he had no mind to meet Old Comical half way, notwithstanding Old Comical's money rung for the landlord: "Make out your bill, Domine, and either I myself, or the Lord Mayor of London, will pay the reckoning immediately."

Upon which Master Stiff, without asking what the Lord Mayor of London had to do with Old Comical's account,

took pen in hand, turned to his book, and produced Old Comical a bill, six feet long, in a very short space of time; while Mrs. Stiff told Old Comical the story of her husband's wig. "I disputed the matter with the sow," quoth she, "and said, 'The wig belongs to my husband, and not to yours, Madam;' but the old sow said 'Humph,' swallowed the wig, tail and all, and looked as hungry as if she could have eaten another." Mr. Stiff now put his bill into Old Comical's hand, with a low bow, which is always a sign of high charges; and, while Old Comical was reading over his account, Mrs. Stiff scolded Mr. Stiff for putting dripping and flour enough into his wig, on Sunday mornings, to make it a dinner for a hog! Old Comical, having perused his bill, turned his eye to his landlord and landlady, who were spitting brimstone at one another, upon the cost, the charges, and the loss, of Mr. Stiff's best wig.

"Here, Master Stiff," quoth Old

Comical, handing him his bill, "put your eaxon at the foot of the account, and I will pay for all." Whereupon, Old Comical came down slap-dash upon the nail, like a man of honour and of ample fortune, threw ten shillings amongst the servants like a handful of dust, and told Master Stiff that he should melt another ounce of silver with him before he left the Swan. To come down on the nail, reader, is an old court phrase for paying a man's bill; to come down slap-dash upon the nail, is when a man fires his hand into his pocket like thunder, tears it out again like lightning, and dashes the ready rhino down upon the counter with a hearty jerk, like a man pelting at a mad dog, in such a manner that the cash danceth into the mouth and eyes of the receiver: this was the way Old Comical paid Master Stiff; not as folks pay their bills now-a-days, like a blind man, at sight.

Master Stiff had now got his money in hand, and it tickled his fingers so, that it

set him a laughing. When a bad debt is paid it goes to a man's heart ; it is as good as a gift ; and whatever tradesmen, and others, may think, we must needs say, the more bad debts they have on their books the better. What glorious days these are, reader, at this present moment, when nobody has got a debt but what is a monstrous bad one ! Master Stiff and Old Comical now shook hands ; and, as there is a warmth in reconciliation that makes people thirsty, Dame Stiff, seeing which way the winds were blowing, got a smoking bowl of half and half together—she knew of old how to brew the right sort—and, as soon as she had put it together, she, Old Comical, and John Stiff, all got round it, and did their best endeavours to pull it to pieces. When Old Comical tasted the liquor, he smacked his lips, and said it was some of the old tackle. So John Stiff, his wife, and Old Comical, opened their hearts, and poured the noble fluid into the ventricles thereof : they drank,

and they laughed, and they cracked their jokes ; and Old Comical was in all his glory. Now the worst of a bowl of the best punch is, that it always has a bottom to it, and the better the liquor is, the sooner folks get to it. Well, we must make the best of things under the moon, and when we come to the bottom of one bowl, old boys, we must make haste and call for another. Now Master Stiff, and his jolly dame, looked red, and waxed exceedingly merry ; and they called on Old Comical for a song with a chorus to it, that they might put in what they had to spare at the tail of each staff ; but Old Comical shook his head, and told them they had forgot the day ; and he pointed through the window at the people in the street, who were going with their pastor to the evening service. " Fiddle-faddle !" quoth Dame Stiff, getting the bricks and mortar ready to build another bowl of the old order of architecture, " Fiddle-faddle !" said she to Old Comical, " we have been merry

on a Sunday together, and had a song too, before now." "Ays!" quoth Old Comical, "there was a time when I was any thing but honest; but times are turned about, old female: once upon a time I broke the sabbath-day and cheated every body; now I keep it and pay my debts; how d'ye like my shapes now?"

Saying which, Old Comical took his hat off a peg, and went to church after the parson of the parish. As soon as he was gone, Mrs. Stiff put the cork into the bottle; for, though she liked a drop at another's expense, she and Master Stiff were a little more sparing when the liquor ran at their own. After all, they scarce knew what to make of Old Comical; they knew, to their cost, what a sad rogue he used to be: they could not get it out of their heads but that he was come upon some of his old tricks, and Mrs. Stiff cautioned her husband to have an eye to him; "for going to church," she said, "was a very bad sign: be-

sides," said she, "I have not heard him swear one oath since he has been in the house, and that is a token he is come in disguise. He has paid off his old score, certainly ; but I have known folks in my days to be honest in a penny and rogues in a pound. John," said she, locking up the rum and the brandy, "we must have an eye to him : his fine gentleman, here, in livery, may be an accomplice ; and his chariot stolen goods, for any thing we know. He has paid us the sixteen pounds, that he owed us, it is true ; and upon the credit of that may be come to let us in for fifty : we must have an eye to him, John." "Leave me alone as to the matter of an eye," quoth Master Stiff, winking ; "one use folks make of their eyes is to see ; leave me alone there." The reason why John Stiff said this was, because he had a red night-cap on his head ; and that accounts for matters very well. A boat, reader, runs on at a pretty good rate in simple water ; a woman's tongue cannot get on at all,

unless there be plenty of rum and brandy mixed with it; that is, it is apt to sink if there is not something pretty strong under it. If the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans were brandy and water, instead of salt and water, how the ladies would fall to study navigation! But let that pass—Dame Stiff's tongue was adrift, and it ran at a great rate, as follows: “Old Comical is a pretty fellow to go to church indeed! If he does not come back and laugh at the parson, the sooner we get him out of the house the better, now he has paid his bill. If any man has more religion than his neighbour he is sure to be a rogue: I can't think what folks go to church for, if it is not to come the more easily upon tick. The parson, I am sure, is none of our best friends; if people minded all he said, we, in the public line, should be all ruined! Who would come in and give orders for more than they could eat? Who would ring a bell for another bowl, or t'other bottle? If folks came in only

to satisfy nature, would they satisfy us? Who would eat when they were not hungry, and drink when they were not dry? We publicans get half our money by folks calling for what they don't want. If the parson must needs preach against drunkenness, I wish he may be poisoned in the next pot of sixpenny! One would think the parsons preached down good eating and drinking that they may keep all the good things to themselves! What is temperance? Innkeepers must get their bread. What is justice? One man must be made to pay for what another runs in debt. What is honesty? The hangman must live. What is the devil? Somebody must be damned." This was the sum and substance of an hour's talk between John Stiff and his wife, when in came Old Comical from church.

CHAP. X.

Old Comical visits Mr. and Mrs. Smith : he surveys Mr. Smith's Estate : discovers a dreadful Plot upon Rosa : what followed upon it : Old Comical departs for London.

WHILE Madam Stiff was in the pulpit upon the aforesaid texts, Old Comical came in from church. Mrs. Stiff asked him where he had been ? He said " To serve his best friend." " At what place ?" " At church," said Old Comical. " What d'ye go there for ?" said she. " Because I have a great deal to be thankful for," said he. " You are laughing in your sleeve," said she. " To be thankful for favours makes a man's heart merry," quoth Old Comical : " if any one makes me a present, I thank the maker as well as the giver." " Why," said she, " if I give you a coat, then you

will thank the tailor." "I hope you will not stop so short when you are going to be hanged, and forget who made the sheep," quoth Old Comical. "You're an odd devil," said she, "and that's the next step to a methodist parson; and he's a devil in petticoats." "Why," said Old Comical, "petticoats and the devil have gone together from the beginning, from Eve's cool green petticoat down to your warm lamb's flannel:—and there let it rest."

"Now, Domine Stiff, in what part of this town does one Mr. Smith live? I have a little business with him." "A little business with him?" said Mrs. Stiff, "I wish ye had a little business with his daughter; would tie a brick round her neck, and throw her into the village horse-pond." Old Comical pricked up his ears at this; for living so much in his neighbourhood he had known Rosa from a child. "Why, what has his daughter done to be dipped in dirty water," quoth Old Comical, "ha!

Madam Stiff?" "Done!" said she, "mischief enough, of all conscience, in this neighbourhood, whatever she has left undone in another. If I were to tell you all, I should not know where to begin or where to end—two gentlemen have been killed in this place upon her account, a jilting young slut; the whole neighbourhood has been in an uproar about her." Mrs. Stiff was sitting at the kitchen fire when Old Comical drew a chair near her; and, in about half an hour, Dame Stiff, who could speak the English language, told him the whole story of Rosa's exploits, which he heard without uttering one syllable: but as soon as Madam Stiff shut up her mouth, he raised his eyes up the chimney, and said, in a tone of admiration, "Lawk-a-daisey!" The landlord of the Swan now, by Old Comical's desire, walked with him to show him Mr. Smith's house; and, having shown him the door, left Old Comical to do as he pleased with it; and it is a thing that gets almost as

many hard raps in this world as a man's pate ; but it does not always quite so well deserve them.

Old Crab never meddled with such a thing as a knocker, but always laid his oaken stick on with three or four hard bangs ; but Old Comical took the knocker between his finger and his thumb with much delicacy, and gentlemanlike demeanour, and gave three decent raps, which brought little Tim, the footboy, into the throat of the passage, and forthwith to the entrance thereof, where he found a gentleman in a blue coat, and a gold-laced waistcoat, standing at the mouth of it ; on the which he, the said little Tim, made his bow first, and then his speech, and said, " Pray, Sir, what do you want ? " " Your master is upon the look-out for a gentleman to-day ? " " O yes, Sir," said Tim, " he expects one Mr. Mathers—" " I am the man," quoth Old Comical. " In good time, Sir," said little Tim, " for dinner is just ready." " And I am just ready for

pillar, in order to mortify the sinful lusts of the flesh."

"Pray, Mr. Mathers," said Rosa, "when did you leave home?" "It is now ten days since," said he; "some business laid hold of the tail of my coat in London, and kept me there a day or two with Old Peticraft, the attorney. I was forced to wait until he had read over your father's title deeds, and then for his directions, before I came here." "Did George Grove tell you this himself, Mr. Mathers," said she, "or heard it you from another?" "He came one day to the farm," said he, "and told the thing to me while I was feeding Old Crab's hogs; and wanted me to write him a letter to laugh him out of his follies." "Did George Grove say if he mentioned my name in his letter, Mr. Mathers?" "Yes," said he; "there was a good deal about you said in the letter." "What? for Heaven's sake, Mr. Mathers, tell me what?" "Why, Rosy, if I must

tell you—" "O you must, you must indeed!" cried she, interrupting him—"you have bad news to tell me, I'm sure you have.—I fear some mischief out of this neighbourhood has reached my Elsmere." "Some has," said he; "and George Grove is gone to Scotland on your account: don't ye cry, Rosy, don't ye cry," quoth Old Comical, with a tear on his nose, "all will be well again, yes, very exceeding well." "O my foreboding heart!" cried Rosa, "I feared this—O this cursed neighbourhood! yes, indeed, I feared this mischief!" saying which, Rosa walked away to the other side of the field which Old Comical was measuring; and, when she had got at a distance, she leaned against an oak, and wept as if her heart was breaking.

But having just dropped a hint of this matter we must leave it at present, and go on to another. Hint of what matter? the breaking of Rosa's heart? No, reader, but what might lead to it with some show of reason, Elsmere's strange neglect

of his Rosa. Alas, poor maiden, she was now in a fine gallery of pictures, hung round, however, with no very pleasant resemblances or representations for all that, and the portrait of herself was not much to her liking, viz. a damsel in distress, painted to the life. It was a little unlucky that Rosa had never, until this moment, asked herself this question; What would Elsmere think of my conduct here? a sad oversight! though the question lay just before her shoes. A lady that tumbles neck and heels into a great hole, has some reason to think that she has seen it too late: Rosa was in a very bad one at present, and little thought while she was breaking other people's hearts, that she was going just the right way to break her own. But no more stitches on this side the jacket at present. The other matter of which we spake must be let in here; it follows thus: Old Comical, amongst other things, had two eyes in his head, and he soon saw how Rosa stood in the favour of this

neighbourhood, that she was so much in the good graces of many, that they could have been glad to have seen the dogs gnaw her bones for their next meal; and Old Comical was the more upon the look-out because he soon found her to be in danger: she had shut up four houses in the neighbourhood, and sent the inhabitants to eat their bread in other parts. How, if you had been a baker in this place, reader, how would you have liked that? and if you had been a butcher selling six legs of mutton yesterday, and only one leg to day, would it not have looked a little like a failing trade? From these you may take a taste of the tempers of others who lived in the way of commerce with the neighbourhood: take notice, reader, four families were now gone out of it, and had taken all their custom along with them; yes, and some of their bills, which were to be paid at a future opportunity. Now Rosa came in charge for all this mischief; if she had not come into the neighbourhood it was

said, people's customers had not gone out of it; many had laid in stock to meet their demands, which now lay dead upon their hands, for want of the usual custom: add to this, not only honest and worthy tradesmen suffered in this case; but what was worse, a great many thieves and rogues, who lived on little thefts and robberies—for every gentleman's house swarms with these vermin—came upon the parish, and Rosa's beauty, amongst other mischiefs, *raised the poor's rates*; for if poor rogues cannot live by thievery, the parish must support them: this is a general rule all over England, and it is but just that every parish should keep its own thieves, if they cannot keep themselves by stealing: now the more poor rogues steal, it is the better for any parish, and the rates are lower, which must needs be the case where gentlemen's houses stand pretty thick in any neighbourhood—see what mischief a pretty woman may do in a parish.

Rosa had now heated this hundred red

hot, and Old Comical found out this thing, viz. that when any body was in the middle of a great fire, it was just possible that such person might be burned ; and, having a very great regard for Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and their daughter, he lay upon the watch. Now people that keep a good look-out see more than others that keep no good look-out at all, which, however surprising it may be, is, nevertheless, very true. An odd fellow, who passed himself for a foreigner, took Old Comical's eye; he lay by upon his suspicion, and found him out to be the son of one of the great gentlemen who had left the neighbourhood—no other than young Preston, who shot Mr. William Twinkle in a duel, and that to get rid of a rival; for the reader may recollect that these two young gentlemen were both of them in love with, and at the same time encouraged by, Rosa ; not out of love, but malice to both. Young Preston had come to England, unknown to his friends, who lost him all on a sudden, with a

design to be the destruction of Rosa ; by whose arts he had been brought to fight a duel, and kill his friend ; for which gallant exploit, upon certain matters coming to be known, he was under the necessity of making the best of his way out of the kingdom. Now in a place where Rosa had bred so many enemies, young Preston was not long to seek for four desperate fellows to join him in a very wicked plot, which Old Comical discovered thus :

Coming one night from the Swan, on his way to Mr. Smith's house, he saw five men pass by him, one of whom he knew to be the foreigner, as young Preston passed himself in disguise upon the neighbourhood. Now what had taken place between him and Rosa, and between him and Mr. William Twinkle, had all been fished out by Old Comical, as well as who and what he was, in spite of his disguise. " Good night t'ye, gentlemen," said Old Comical ; one said in return, " Good night." " It usually gets dark some time after sunset," quoth

Old Comical. "It is not every body who could have found that out," said the same voice that answered before. "Why no," quoth Old Comical, "a man must be used to making discoveries in the Heavens all his life, to find out such things as that." Now it happened that the word "discoveries" was the only one in the sentence which reached the ear of any of the party; for the men had passed Old Comical at some little distance: upon this, young Preston, who heard it, came back, and asked Old Comical, with an oath, what he meant by discoveries? The word fell from him by accident, he said, and hoped his head would not be knocked off his shoulders for making use of it; upon which he repeated the sentence he had used, in a stammering manner, out of curiosity to see what he could draw out of them; for he saw in a moment the word "discoveries," raised their suspicions, and they were all of them now gathered about him. However, he soon got rid of them

by seeming, by some idle expressions, to be little better than a fool, and took notice of the house, which they presently entered. Suspecting some mischief to be on foot, he followed them into the house, down a long passage, and some steps, which took him to the door of some place like a vault: a woman came to this door, after some knocking, and, opening it, with a candle in her hand, admitted the fellows, and, shutting the door, left Old Comical in utter darkness.

He was too much used to shifts and escapes to be at all alarmed at this, though a door, being suddenly shut and locked at the other end of the passage, a little perplexed him, for he was now caught in a trap; but Old Comical, as full of wiles as a serpent, felt about for the latch of the door which the woman had opened; having found it, he opened the same, and went down a long flight of steps which wound round and round like a screw. A distant light presently struck him; on he went, and found a

lamp hanging over what seemed to be the entrance of a cellar; he put his ear to a key-hole, and heard the following words: "If to-morrow happens to be a fine day, we shall be sure of her in Bridges-wood; her servant told the ostler at the Swan, in my hearing, that she would go that way about one o'clock." "She can't go a better way," said another; "for she may be taken directly to your house, Tom." This was all Old Comical could collect; for the voices grew then more distant, as if the speakers had retired to some inner apartment; and presently no sound of any sort was heard at all.

Now Old Comical had got in, certainly; but it was also an object with him to get out; in order to which, he returned to the passage where he entered, and, feeling his way along the wall, came, at last, to a door which he could not open: after feeling about some time for the usual places where doors are opened, in vain; the latch said yes,

indeed ; but the lock said no : he returned to the place where the lamp hung, and, willing to leave no door untried, he thumped upon one which he found here with his two fists as loud as he could ; presently, hearing people coming, he fell down upon the ground, at the door, as if he were dead : two men opened it with pistols in their hands ; but as they saw Old Comical lie on the ground like one dead already, they thought it would be of no use to shoot him ; but began to lug him about to find out who he was : " The gentleman is not dead," said one ; " but he seems to be quite as drunk as a man could make himself : " and they were at a loss what to do with him. " Let us pull him out into the street," said the other ; " if he happens to die here, we may get into trouble about it."

" If he turns pale before he dies," said the first, " his face will have a great deal to do ; for I never saw a man with a redder in my life." " Lay hold on him," said the other ; " we'll hand him into

the street : he must not lie at our door ; if he should die, we shall be fetched up before the Coroner." Upon which, calling a little boy with a candle, they made shift to lug Old Comical out into the street ; and, setting him upon his bottom at the door of an apothecary, they rang the night-bell, and ran away. They ran one way, and Old Comical ran another ; and when the Doctor opened his door to answer the night-bell, he found nobody ; and that was not one of his best customers, and for this reason, viz. because he never took physic. " Who's there ?" said the Doctor, opening his mouth and his shop-door. Now when an apothecary asks such a question as that at his shop-door, and nobody answers him, an apothecary has all the talk to himself.

Old Comical made the best of his way to Mr. Smith's ; the delay his adventure occasioned brought on a late hour. Mr. and Mrs. Smith were gone to bed ; but he found Rosa, sitting in the parlour, writing a letter. " O Mr. Mathers!"

said she ; “ what, you are come ; we have been wondering what was become of you : we waited for you till ten o'clock before we went to supper, which is a late hour in papa's house ; where have you been, and how came your clothes so dirty ? ” “ Do you ride out any where to-morrow, Rosy ? ” said he. “ Yes,” said she ; “ why do you ask ? ” “ Which way do you ride, Rosy ? ” said he. “ Why do you ask in such an earnest manner ? ” said she. “ Tell me which way you shall ride, Rosy,” said Old Comical. “ Why,” said Rosa, “ I shall ride through Bridges-wood ; I am going to Mr. Povey's, on an errand for my papa.” “ No,” said he ; “ you will not go to Mr. Poveys, and I will give you a reason : but first of all ring the bell and get me some supper ; for I have been these two hours in a damp passage, and the raw air is gone down into my stomach, Rosy ; and then I will tell you a story.”

“ Bless me ! Mr. Mathers,” cried Rosa, holding a candle to his clothes, “ you

look as if somebody had rolled you in the kennel. I hope you have not been knocked down and robbed in the street?" "No, Rosy," quoth he; "they are all too honest in this town for that; it is as pretty-a parish as a man could see from the top of a church tower, I will say that for it, without climbing; let any man climb and say better." Little Tim, Mr. Smith's footboy, now laid the cloth, and put a cold sparerib of pork under Old Comical's nose. "Well done, Tim," said he; "that is the best thing in the world, though there were nothing else: I love every thing belonging to a pig, a shoulder of mutton not excepted:" whereupon Old Comical fell to and ate a good supper. "Now Rosy," said he; "a bason of half-and-half, and that will pack me up for the night—your mamma has not gone to bed and locked up the rum and brandy bottles, I hope?" "No, Mr. Mathers," said Rosa; "she thought you might come home late, and want something warm before you went to bed,

so she left the key of the cellaret with me." "That's right, that's right, that's right," quoth Old Comical, rubbing his hands, and singing the following staff out of one of his own ballads :

Good liquor makes man's heart leap high,
Though he be fifty-five O;
Then mix the bowl, we ne'er shall die
Whilst we are all alive O.

Little Tim, the footboy, burst out a laughing at Old Comical's odd squeak, and put hot water, lemons, sugar, and all the elements in order before Old Comical, to create a bowl of punch. While mixing a bowl of half-and-half, Old Comical was in all his glory : a merry face cheers up the saddest heart ; Rosa could not help laughing at Old Comical's pleasant countenance and jovial chuckle : whereupon, pouring a little of the liquor out of the punch-ladle into a glass, Old Comical tasted it with a relishing smack, and said it was the right sort ; and, giving Rosa a glass,

took one himself, and then told her his evening's adventure.

Poor Rosa felt a cold chill run through her veins, when Old Comical sent another glass of hot punch after it, and spake as follows : " I have made an end of my survey, Rosy, and my master will expect me in London to-morrow night ; but I am determined to stay one day more, to have some fun in Bridges-wood. Never mind ! Rosy—keep up your heart out of your petticoats—an escape, though no wider than the edge of a razor, is as good as another as broad as a turnpike road—take another glass—Rosy ! "

" You will make me tipsey, Mr. Mathers—but I think I never wanted heart so much." " Come, come, no tears, no tears," quoth Old Comical ; " if I don't get you safe into London in less than eight and forty hours, I'll turn you into a filly, put a saddle upon your back, and ride you into Piccadilly upon a full trot ! In the mean time I shall turn myself into a fine lady, and ride upon a side-saddle ;

—I must borrow your riding habit, and some of your petticoats.” “Are you in earnest, Mr. Mathers?” “In earnest! yes,” quoth Old Comical; “stand up and let me measure your back and skirts, and then do you measure mine; the balance between us must be accommodated.” Rosa, though she was a very fine large woman, could not produce a back quite so broad as Old Comical’s; but she was a little taller notwithstanding. “Now,” said he, “go and bring your riding dress.” Rosa fetched two; one made larger than the other for the purpose of coming on upon a thick under waistcoat: Old Comical said he could make the large one do—as, in times of yore, he had been his own tailor, when nobody else would work for him; and necessity, before now, hath made a man a stranger thing—so he took the riding habit and petticoat (which fitted him pretty well) into his apartment with him, together with Mrs. Smith’s work-basket, which furnished him with the

right sort of tools, and made matters fit to a T, which is the tailors' letter, before he went to bed. The next day all was to be kept a secret between Rosa and Old Comical, and folks be left to find out what they could for themselves. Rosa's horses were brought to the door by William, her groom; and Old Comical mounted the side-saddle, with a thick green veil put over his hat and face three times doubled; and when he had Rosa's habit and petticoat on, a fine sturdy lass he made.

William, the groom, did nothing but admire his mistress's broad back as he rode behind Old Comical, who got on one of Rosa's hats very well over a flannel night-cap—he might catch cold without his wig—and a little bush of false hair was curled with a grace in his neck. One said, as they rode along, "How fat that minx gets!" "Aye," said another, "she don't take much to heart all the mischief she has done." "Nothing will

hurt her," said a third ; " but great guns and empty cupboards."

As soon as Old Comical and William came to the skirts of Bridges-wood ; " William," said Old Comical, " come this way." William started at the sound of a man's voice ; and, when he rode up, " Take this brace of pistols, William," said Old Comical ; " we shall have some fun in this wood, I expect, presently." On which Old Comical gave a loud whistle betwixt his fingers. His whistle was immediately answered by another at some distance ; and Old Comical said, " Ride behind your mistress, William ; all's right." William took his place at his usual distance, with no small curiosity for what was to happen.

Old Comical now took a foot's pace, and rode, as slowly as possible, until he came to the thickest part of Bridges-wood : in a moment five fellows rushed out of a brake, three seized on William, and two on Old Comical : the first fellow

who seized William was shot dead ; but the other two, not at all dismayed, would soon have pulled him off his horse, when Old Comical uttered a loud scream ; at which signal six fellows rushed upon the four who remained, took them prisoners, and released William and Old Comical. The person who was shot dead was found, upon examination, to be Mr. Thomas Preston, who had gallantly headed the party on the post of honour ; for there was no danger to be feared but from Rosa's servant, who was a very stout young fellow.

Old Comical, now having his birds in hand, gave William orders to take his mistress's horses to an inn agreed on, in the London-road, where he would find her, and bid her make the best of her way to town ; where she arrived at Lord Beaumystar's house in the evening. Mr. and Mrs. Smith were left in a puzzle ; and Old Comical, after having given his directions to the constable and his party, what to do with their prisoners, made

the nearest road back to unriddle matters to Rosa's papa and mamma. As he walked by the windows, Mrs. Smith said, "What brings you back on foot, Ross; I hope you have not been thrown from your horse?" "No, mamma," said Old Comical in a feigned voice; and Mrs. Smith did not find out the cheat until he came in and threw back his veil. Mr. and Mrs. Smith started; and knowing Old Comical's tricks of old, fell a laughing at seeing him in women's clothes. Old Comical, however, soon told them a story that made them both shiver like an ague: when he had done, he put a note from Rosa into Mr. Smith's hand, which informed them that she was gone off very safe to London; and they received a letter the next morning which gave an account of her safe arrival at Lord Beaumystar's in Portman-square.

Thus Rosa and this neighbourhood parted—but what friends, the reader is left to find out for himself. To give him a little help, however, in this matter,

her carriage and servants, who followed her with her luggage the next day, had the honour to be pelted with rotten eggs, rotten apples, mud, and dead vermin, out of the village! Well, reader, Mr. Smith having now come to a full determination to sell his place and property in this neighbourhood to his cousin, Mr. Grove, of Hindermark, and Rosa made good her promise to her mother, to get her papa and all his baggage out of this said neighbourhood; Old Comical, having this time paid his bill very honourably at the Swan, made a map of Mr. Smith's estate, and forelaid the grounds for the arrival of Old Crab, took his leave of Mr. and Mrs. Smith, put four of Master Stiff's best post-horses to his chariot, and left the town of Three Stars in a shower of mud and a clap of thunder.

CHAP. XI.

*What became of the Constable and his Prisoners :
Old Comical's Arrival in London : Meets Old
Crab : Old Crab visits Mr. Smith, buys his Estate :
Mr. and Mrs. Smith return with him to London.*

TO catch and not hold fast is almost as good as not to catch at all. The four men, as soon as William, Rosa's servant, and Old Comical, left them, rose upon the constable and his party, fairly beat them, and every man ran away : there was one man, however, who had no mind to run ; his race was put a stop to in this world, namely, Mr. Thomas Preston, who was shot, by Rosa's servant, through the heart. By papers found upon him, the plot to seize on, and violate, Rosa in the wood, was made clear enough ; amongst others, a letter written to Mr. Edward Goose, which not only stated the particulars of the plot, but even

named the people whom he had engaged in it. We had inserted this letter; but received an order for its erasement, which we obeyed with some reluctance. He told his friend that he was come to England in disguise, for the very purpose of revenging the neighbourhood on the person of Rosa, which he would effect, or die in the attempt. But, as the catastrophe of this work is taking a quick step towards us, we must now pass on to other matter.

Old Crab was come to London; and Pettycraft, the lawyer, had orders to get the writings ready for the conveyance of Mr. Smith's estate to Mr. Grove of Hindermark; the price, and other matters, being agreed on between Mr. Smith and Old Crab, by letter, upon condition that the land, upon survey, made good the description given of it in quantity and quality. This, by Old Comical's account, it was now found to do; but Old Crab, who chose to see things with his own eyes as well as other people's, set off the

day after Old Comical's arrival in town, on a visit to Mr. Smith ; when he found Old Comical's map accurate, and his account of the estate a true one : he measured some of the land over again, however, but found very few links difference between his own survey and the map. Old Crab brought Pettycraft, the attorney, along with him, when the deeds were executed by Mr. Smith, and a draft given him for the purchase money on Mr. Grove's banker in town. Mrs. Smith soon got all matters packed up, and when the last waggon left the door with the goods, she broke out and sung for joy.

Old Crab having now settled all matters according to Mr. Grove's wishes and orders, he gave the neighbours to understand, that Mr. Grove, being now by far the greatest common-field landholder in the parish, should move for an inclosure the first opportunity. Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and Old Crab, now set off together for London, where they, the

said Mr. and Mrs. Smith, remained until they were informed, by letter, of the safe arrival of their goods and chattels at Rosa's magnificent mansion in Cumberland, Spade-oak.

This is all dim and dull enough ! Very well, reader ; you must not expect a picture to be hung on every wall. History, like other buildings, must needs have its frame and body, strong coarse work, such as plates and beams, girders, interties, rafters, perlines, underpinnings, stones, bricks, and mortar, as well as architraves, capitals, entablatures, cornices, hyperthura, and other ornamental projections. In history there must be an evolution of matter, a plain detail or narration of facts : there must be chronology, to show when a thing happened ; geography, to show in what division of the world ; and topography, to show what place in the said division ; as well as sentiment, anecdote, simile, metaphor, and ornamental flourishes of wit and genius. You must expect a little dark-

ness between the flashes of lightning, especially if it happens in the night. The meeting, however, of Old Crab and Old Comical in London may afford you some amusement; we will give a short account of it.

Old Crab was engaged in a variety of business in town at Lady-day as usual, while Old Comical was surveying Mr. Smith's estate in the country; a day, however, had now been fixed for Old Comical to return to town, and lay the map of the land, and other documents, before Old Crab. Upon his arrival he made the best of his way to the Bedford Coffee-house, where Old Crab usually eat what he called his "bit of victuals." Coming in, "Waiter," quoth he, "have you got such a thing as a large gentleman in a black coat and a bright flaxen wig in the house?" "Mr. Decastro?" said the waiter; "yes, Sir; he is at dinner in the left hand corner of the back part of the coffee-room:" saying which, he put a bill of fare into Old Co-

mical's hand, who received the savoury bit of paper with a relishing smack that made the waiter smile. Whereupon he walked the length of the coffee-room with the bill of fare in his hand, like a man that had come in with a good appetite, and a mind to bespeak a good dinner. Presently he espied Old Crab, sitting in a corner where there was just room enough for a man and his chair, with a large tankard at his right hand, busily engaged in a volume of papers: half a cheshire cheese stood before him, which usually comes last to table and tops a gentleman up. "Here I am at last, Master," quoth Old Comical. "Why, John," quoth Old Crab, "what has kept you in the country? you said in your letter you should be here the day before yesterday." "A little pimple broke out on the face of affairs unexpectedly, Master—but I can't tell stories upon an empty stomach. This packet contains the map of the estate, a letter from Mr. Smith, and other papers—read all over

while I get a morsel of victuals ; I hav'n't eat a bit since nine o'clock this morning, and my bowels are as full of wind as a church organ. Here, waiter!" cried Old Comical, flourishing the bill of fare over his head ; " Come this moment and take orders for dinner ; I shall be starved to death !" " You may dine here, Masters," quoth Old Crab ; " I have done." The waiter coming, " What would you like for dinner, Sir?" " Like for dinner," quoth Old Comical ; " why, a drove of oxen at top, a herd of swine at the bottom, a pen of fat calves on one side, and a flock of sheep on the other ; and, d'ye hear? put Covent Garden in the middle by way of a dish of vegetables.—Waiter ! bring a beef-steak first that I may taste a sample of your meat, and hold the drovers in readiness in case I choose to dine here." While his beef-steak was on the fire, Old Comical told Old Crab all that had happened in Mr. Smith's neighbourhood ; and lastly, the affair in Bridgeswood, which had kept him a day beyond

his time in the country. Old Crab blamed Mr. and Mrs. Smith exceedingly, for not having more regard to their daughter, and said, he should give them a severe lecture the first time he met them—and he was as good as his word—adding, with respect to Rosa, that if young Elsmere came to know what pretty pranks she had played in her father's neighbourhood, he would have nothing more to do with her. He animadverted with much severity on her conduct in general; but her destruction of Mr. White-eye's family came in for the greatest weight of his anger: it was a scandalous thing he said, to inveigle a gang of young fellows into her snares; but to hold out a bait to a man who had a wife and family, and he the clergyman of the parish too, was an outrage she deserved to be hanged for.

“ Ah, master !” quoth Old Comical, wrapping up a bit of beaf-steak in horse-radish, dipping it in shalot and gravy, and putting it into his mouth; “ Ah,

master! I am afraid Rosy has been a very naughty girl; but you must not forget how the fine folks spit into Mr. Smith's face at the vicarage. Some have gone so far as to say, that to spit into a gentleman's face is an offence to him: it may be a compliment—but for a father to have his daughter called a prostitute to his own head—think of that, master,” quoth Old Comical. “The scoundrels deserved to have their bones broken,” quoth Old Crab; “and the young baggage to be skinned alive for leading the parson on to think she was willing to become one. Smith and his wife have been ill used, John, by a pack of purse-proud rascals that bring as much nuisance as money into a neighbourhood, and there lies the very devil in the matter; money gives one man a power to insult another, and some scoundrels would as soon lay out their money in that way as cut a man's throat. However, to kindle quarrels and murders is a more heinous crime, and it was the

duty of the girl's parents to put a stop to her intrigues before all this mischief had been done. I shall talk to Smith about this matter when I see him. Who, d'ye say, were shot in the duels?" "Sir Philip Mildenall, and Mr. William Twinkle," said Old Comical; "the first for abusing Miss Smith in young Twinkle's presence, who was then in love with her; the second, for disputing Rosy with young Preston in the field." "Was he the same whom the groom shot in the wood?" "The same," quoth Old Comical; "so he got a blue plum in his turn; and the groom would have shot a brace of them if the other pistol had not missed fire. Their amazement, when they found they had got a man instead of a woman, set me a laughing—'she has got a pair of men's boots on!' said one; 'and a pair of leather breeches!' said another; and I squeaked like a pig, rape, murder, fire, and thieves!"

"This was a pretty fox-hunt!" quoth Old Crab; "if the villains had effected

their purpose, this young biding would have been paid her wages for her services." "Yes," quoth Old Comical; "and sent away with a pretty good character." What followed will not much entertain the reader, unless he be a land-surveyor; for the talk then turned upon the map and survey of Mr. Smith's estate, time's prices for purchase of land and houses, covenants and terms of leases, repairs, hedges, ditches, timber, road-rates, church-rates, customs, duties, poor-rates, and the like matters, fair reader, that will neither excite your passions, or turn out much worth your money in the book-market.

Old Crab now pulled out his watch, and said it was bed-time, and then a yellow canvas bag, with a "Here Waiter!" to pay his shot. "I shall send you home to-morrow, John," quoth Old Crab; "meet me here at breakfast." Saying which, Old Crab made the best of his way to the Old Hummums, where he always slept when in London. "Wai-

ter!" quoth Old Comical; "can a man have a bed in this house, and get into it without being eat up alive by the bugs and fleas before cock-crow?" The waiter laughed; for he had seen Old Comical before that day; and said he might sleep where he used to do, in his old room, if he pleased, as it happened to be disengaged. "Pray, Sir," said the waiter, "did you find a small silver nutmeg grater in the bottom of the mug which came to table with your toast and ale? my mistress dropped one into your beer, when she grated the nutmeg into it; and, being called aside before she had time to take it out, I brought it in your warm beer at dinner time." "The nutmeg-grater went down the red lane, then," quoth Old Comical; "for I was very dry, and took off the pint of ale at one pull! The devil of any nutmeg-grater did I find, or feel, when I pulled the inside of the mug out?" "You must have swallowed it," said the waiter; "my mistress is sure she let it fall in,

and I am sure I never took it out ; for I never knew that it was in the cup until she inquired for it." "What size was the nutmeg-grater?" quoth Old Comical, with a stare. "About the size of a nutmeg, Sir," said the waiter. "If it did go down, it went down without grating my throat," quoth Old Comical; "but look you, my lad; you shall not put it in your bill unless you can swear that I put it in my belly." The next morning, at eight o'clock, Old Crab came thundering into the coffee-room, in his thick-soled boots, with his oaken staff in his hand, which he thumped upon the floor at every second step he took on the boards. "Waiter! is Mathers up yet?" quoth he. "No, Sir." "Have ye got any cold beef in the larder?" "Yes, Sir." "What is't; boiled or roast?" "Roast, Sir. "Here! lay a cloth, and bring it directly, with a quart of strong beer made warm, with some nutmeg and a toast; and, d'ye, hear? go and call Mathers; the scoundrel will lie a-bed all day!"

"Here I am, master," quoth Old Comical, coming to Old Crab's table—"You lie, you dog," quoth he to the waiter; "you lie, you dog, about this nutmeg-grater; it was the mug I swallowed after all!" opening his wide mouth, and setting every body in the room a laughing. "Come here, Mathers," quoth Old Crab, "don't stand gabbling there; I have no time to lose," taking a packet of papers out of his great-coat pocket: "here! this letter is for my wife; this for Master Grove of Hindermark; tell him I will write again as soon as I have seen Smith: this letter is for Master Cartland; tell him I've got the money for his oxen at last, five-hundred and fifteen pounds; and if he wants to know the character of the butcher, you may tell him Old Bang is a scoundrel: it is the whole money all but five pounds—tell him he may think himself well off. This is a letter for Nelly Dobbs; tell her the old man died without any will, and the whole property comes to the

heir at law : I have made him settle a hundred a year on her for her life, however ; so if she has a mind to leave my service, and turn fool and fine lady, she may do as she pleases." " If she does, Master," quoth Old Comical ; " after what you have done for her, she deserves to go through the horse-pond on her way from the premises." " This parcel is for my brother John : tell his wife the beds were sent last Friday : I ordered them to be ripped open after they were made, and found that the rascals had changed the feathers : I charged them to the throat with the cheat, and they owned, at last, that their head fellow had made a mistake, and took the worse feathers instead of the better sample : if one man plunders another, it is only a mistake now-a-days. It is a pity some of these villains were not hanged by mistake, and the lucky blunder not found out till after they were suffocated ! Tell her I stood by and saw the right feathers put in, and sewed up myself, and well packed ; for

I never lost sight of the beds till they were put into the waggon, and I put my own seal upon the wrapping cases. 'Tis a common bite in London for a man to sell you a good thing and take your money for it, and, as soon as your back is turned, send home a bad one instead of it: they will gnaw cinders in hell some day for these things, if they live upon roast-beef and plum-pudding on earth! Cheat a man and have an answer ready, is one way to make a good tradesman, I warrant."

"I was served such a trick once," quoth Old Comical, "in a pair of ready-made boots; the devil fetch such rascals I say." "The devil has no occasion," quoth Old Crab; "they will come themselves, and save the devil that trouble. Upon which he put half a pound of roast beef upon Old Comical's plate, and another half pound on his own, and Old Crab and Old Comical set to and ate their breakfasts. "There cannot be better fun," quoth Old Comical; "there

cannot be better fun, for an honest man, than to see a rogue tossed in a blanket. I remember, in my honest days, I was tossed in a blanket for stealing a leg of mutton out of a butcher's tray, and the leg of mutton along with me ; it danced in my face two or three times, and made my nose bleed : there was a great crowd come about my blanket, and you never saw honest men laugh more heartily in all your life, Master."

" You have been a sad rogue in your time, John," quoth Old Crab. " Be matters as they might, Master," said Old Comical, " I never was a sad rogue in my life ; for I never robbed a man of a penny without laughing." " Aye," quoth Old Crab, " and if you had been hanged you would have died in character, and gone grinning out of the world." " Heaven bless your honour !" quoth Old Comical, " and thank you for all favours. I can now say Amen, at church, with a good conscience, and look upon a bit of string without starting : it

was you that fetched the spots out of the leopard's skin, and washed the Ethiopian white, Master. An honest life is the merriest after all; I have tried both: you took me in my own way, Master; you saw that I loved fun, and made me ten times merrier than ever I was, by making me an honest fellow. I have found this; a rogue may laugh, but none, except an honest man, can laugh heartily." Upòn which, Old Crab, pulling his nose out of a tankard of strong beer, tipped with froth, ginger, and nutmeg, "John," quoth he, "tell my wife I look to be at home next Saturday se'nnight; I suppose Smith's business will keep me at his house a week: push them forward upon the barley land, as soon as you get home: this is good weather for stirring."

"What d'ye mean to do with Barn Close, Master—sow it with barley?"

"Barn Close is too foul for barley; it must lie for turnips, John; it never answers to sow any corn upon foul land.

Go to the Castle when you get home, and ask my brother for leave to cut down one of the great elms in Barn Close hedge; the barley-barn floor is worn out. You are so fond of galloping about in your gingerbread coach, or you might take Old Cartland's money with you: you'll be pulled out of that gim-crack by your ears, and get your throat cut some day; this comes of finery." "Give me the money, Master," quoth Old Comical, "and fear not: if I fall amongst highwaymen they'll spare an old cousin pad; if amongst pickpockets, they will reverence an old brother finger: give me the money, Master; if I lose it I'll make it good. Old Cartland will dance for joy at the sight of his cash, such is the pleasure of getting in a bad debt; it will be the best fun in the world for me to drink a bason of half and half, and smoke a pipe with the old man upon this his recovery; I'll make him cut a caper before I pay him the money. It has been a sore place in the

poor old man's heart these three years : whenever I met him at market my heart felt as if it were in a pair of pincers."

" Well, well," quoth Old Crab, " here, take the money ; it will not be much for such a rich scoundrel as you are come to be, to pay if you are robbed of it ; here's your painted wheel-barrow come." Old Comical's chariot drove up to the Piazzas at that moment, with four post horses, and stood ready to take the Lord of the Manor of Cock-a-doodle into the North. " Come, Master Punch, jump into your coach," quoth Old Crab ; " get off, get off, I want you at home ; the scoundrels will be as idle as beggars on the farm." Whereupon Old Comical stepped into his carriage, and away he went at the heels of two brace of high flying cattle, hat and wig, out of the city of London. Now most folks are glad to get over a bad road, but Old Comical made ten times the haste to get over a good one.

Ah ! reader, see, only see, how old

habits stick to a man : Old Comical went off, at last, and never paid for his breakfast ! “ Waiter,” quoth Old Crab, with his yellow canvass bag in his hand, “ what is to be paid here ? ” “ Breakfasts for two gentlemen, if you please, Sir,” said John the waiter, putting a small piece of paper into Old Crab’s hand. “ Breakfasts for two ! ” roared Old Crab ; “ what, is that rascal gone off without paying for his beef ? ” “ Mr. Mathers settled his account last night, Sir,” said John ; “ his breakfast this morning might have slipped his memory.” Upon which, Old Crab thrust his hand down to the bottom of his canvass bag, with a long growl, and paid for his own and Old Comical’s breakfast.

CHAP. XII.

*Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and Old Crab, leave London
for the North : further Accounts of Elsmere and
Rosa.*

SOME historians give their ladies and gentlemen a sly wink ; and they slip off when their readers the least suspect an exit : their characters steal away just as if they had picked their reader's pockets, and he sees no more of them or his money either. Now we will not say but this may have been the case with some of ours : but if the reader looks for more ceremony, we will, for the future, insist upon every gentleman making his bow, and every lady her curtsy, before they leave the book ; which, if the reader be fond of bows and curtseys, will at least be civil ; and give him an opportunity to prepare his mind for an eternal fare-

well. Old Comical, reader, is gone off into the North ; and now Old Crab, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, are just ready to follow him ; and we should be very sorry if you were not much vexed at the thought of parting with them for ever : it will be some chance if they appear again, indeed, in this episode ; but much yet remains to bring our history down to the present day ; and several more episodes to come in, before the work will be completed. But of these matters thus far.

Upon Mr. and Mrs. Smith's arrival in London, they took up their abode at Mr. Grove's house, which was already prepared for the reception of the family from Hindermark, which usually came to the town very early in the season. As soon as Rosa heard of their arrival she paid them a visit ; and their meeting, after her escape, put all parties to the expense of a great many tears. Rosa, they observed, looked very ill ; and her looks were not at odds with her case.

Much talk now befel about Elsmere, of whom Mr. and Mrs. Smith knew nothing, until Old Crab gave some account of him ; and Rosa, having now received overwhelming proofs that he had deserted her, the moment her father mentioned his name, burst into tears, in spite of every effort to suppress her emotions. Her father and mother corrected her, with a tender hand, indeed, for not having told them of this love affair ; and when a secret is half-born, the rest might as well come into the world. Rosa took the lead, and gave them a full and true account of the whole matter ; adding, that she had now reason to think that, notwithstanding the vows and promises that had passed between them, that Elsmere had taken very high offence at something she had done in her father's neighbourhood, and was come to a mind to cast her off : which, Mr. Smith, being now informed of his character, seemed to think a very likely thing. Rosa, who had given her whole heart to Elsmere,

was like to go distracted at the thoughts of losing one on whom she had fixed all her affections; and the Lady Euthelia Ray, one of her best and oldest friends, did every thing she could to comfort her, as well as Lord and Lady Beamystar, at whose house she was upon a visit : all was in vain. Rosa said she was sure her heart would break ; and all she prayed for was, to be as soon as possible released from her misery. Mr. and Mrs. Smith saw, with much concern, that her sorrow was deep in her heart ; that it was so rooted there, that to pull it out would be to rend the soil in which it grew. It was better, she said, that she should die than live ; an event which, she said, she was sure would soon take place ; at which words she put her will into her father's hand, telling him that the only pleasure she now had left was thus to be able to restore the old family estates into his hands : her race in this world was now like to be a short one ; and what severe pangs her conduct in it

might give her soever, her affection for her parents was as sincere as any child ever felt; and her love for a young person, whose name gave her too much pain to mention, as true and as kind as any ever known to the female heart. She had, she said, written several letters to Elsmere, not one of which had been answered: she had employed means to find if he had received them; she had now obtained certain knowledge that he had received them all; and, with it, his determination to renounce her for ever; alleging, as the cause of such his resolution, her late conduct in her father's neighbourhood.—She had now done with him—it would give her pain, she said, did she know that he felt much sorrow in parting with her, for her last breath should beg all blessings and comforts on him. She knew, she said, that she neither did nor ever could deserve so excellent a young man; and if those whom she had injured could be satisfied with a broken heart, they might go and

thank Elsmere for having revenged their cause upon his Rosa. She seemed to have more to say, but tears stopped her here. Mr. and Mrs. Smith were grieved enough at what she had already said; and much was objected, much opposed, to melancholy and despair. Such their opposition, however, Rosa turned upon themselves, and said, she was glad that they had such excellent moral antidotes to sorrow at hand; they would come in well to support them under the loss of their daughter. No child, she said, could ever love her parents better; and out of that very love grew the cause of her own destruction. In reply to the religious motives to patience and resignation, suggested by her father, she observed, that she could draw little comfort from that source; she was too low and too unworthy a creature to look so high for any consolation; and, indeed, knew little of religion, any further than as it was connected with music, painting, and architecture: she had gone to

church, and pretended to be pious, to please Elsmere, and had looked into some religious books merely for the purpose of furnishing religious conversation when in his company: she had put the best thing to the worst use to gain her ends, if it were true that religion, of which she knew little, were the best thing; if it were so, to be ignorant that it were so, was some excuse for the use she had put it to, which she had not done, perhaps, if she had known it better: she thought her aunt was a woman of great sense; what she neglected, was held cheap by her. This gave Mr. Smith an unexpected blow: he now, when too late, took blame to himself for breeding his daughter under the auspices of the gay and licentious Lady Alicia Grove, who had adorned her niece at every cost with all those ornaments this world admires, but died, and left her unadorned for a better: alas! if not unembellished for that better, Rosa had been good, and Elsmere still her own.

Take good notice, fair reader ; without religion and morality you may rise and shine a little, while a meteor here ; but you will soon fall back into that earth you rose from, and never shine the smallest star in heaven. Elsmere, struck, at first, by Rosa's uncommon beauty, fell in love with the superior graces and brilliancy of her person ; and, inveigled afterwards by her religious baits, pledged his faith upon her being as good as she was handsome ; but, after all, her beauty held but half his heart, and it were much to say it held so much : she had made herself out to be a saint in his eyes ; he admired the woman, it is true, but it was the saint he loved. As soon as he became informed, by what means may appear hereafter, of her wicked conduct in her father's neighbourhood (and he himself came there in secret to be an eye-witness of what he had been told), his heart rose superior to every female charm ; and he turned from her as one does from a nuisance that

disgusts one. Religion hath its enemies : Elsmere himself was one, as well as the hypocritical Rosa. He was not contented to be good, but must needs do religion a mischief by trying to be too good, and by that means making both morality and religion ridiculous. Elsmere strained human nature to be what it was impossible for human nature to become, a perfect thing : his motives were transcendently excellent, but they urged him into situations and exploits that were as transcendently ridiculous ; and what aggravated the matter, he expected to be laughed at by the world ; and laughter, by this means, gave him spurs to become still more ridiculous. His intellects, as far as religion was concerned, were certainly injured ; and, whenever he touched upon that subject, in his letters to Rosa, there was madness as far as he went upon it ; in other matters much good sense and reason. But it would be doing him much injustice not to say that his grief for the loss of Rosa,

whom he tenderly loved by mistake, was severe; notwithstanding he found in her a cloud instead of a Juno. When he discovered what she really was, he wept bitterly; and the promises which he had made her gave him no little pain.

After much meditation on that matter, he concluded that he had now two evils to choose out of; either to take a wicked woman to wife, or break the promises which he had made her: he chose the last. He was blamed for this by the ladies—they might have their reasons—he was commended, however, by some men of no common sense and understanding, who might have theirs also: and for this thing more especially, for becoming himself an eye-witness of Rosa's conduct, and taking nothing for granted, to her discredit, upon the report of others.

Thus, fair reader, Rosa lost her love: take warning by her fate, and bring your wit and beauty to a better account: but, above all, mark this well: be moral

and religious in good earnest, or not pretend to either. Your fine person had better be made up of bones and ulcers, and your face be rather blasted by lightning, than be beautiful; if you come like a destroying angel into the world, and bring destruction rather than a blessing on mankind. Whatever blame was Rosa's due, her parents came in for a considerable share, for not looking better to her education when she was a child, and to her conduct when she was a woman. The splendour of their rich relation, Lady Alicia Grove, dazzled their eyes; and the prospect of money falling into their daughter's lap, when the old lady fell into her grave, bewildered their intellects. They laid their ground, and fairly enough, for a fortune to come, suitable to the high breeding of their daughter; for it certainly was not likely that Lady Alicia, loving Rosa as she did, should breed her to great things, and leave her to little ones after

she had done. Lady Alicia had done the best for her n Alicia knew no better : she t could not be other than a g tion which cost a good deal three hundred pounds a-year at one of the best places to one of the best things ! As gance and fine manners wen certainly one of the said best of the most finished women th introduced at Court. If, fair were made for one world of education is very good, n can be better ; but this is r you can, at best, stay but here, if you can be said upon what is none other tl from one place to anothe pare you with a world o' your journey only, and you at all for what is to of it, is to make but la matter : you are intend

she had done. Lady Alicia thought she had done the best for her niece; Lady Alicia knew no better: she thought that could not be other than a good education which cost a good deal of money; three hundred pounds a-year were given at one of the best places to make Rosa one of the best things! As far as elegance and fine manners went, Rosa was certainly one of the said best things, one of the most finished women that ever were introduced at Court. If, fair reader, you were made for one world only, such an education is very good, nay, nothing can be better; but this is not the case; you can, at best, stay but a short time here, if you can be said to stay at all, upon what is none other than a passage from one place to another. Now to prepare you with a world of fine things for your journey only, and not to prepare you at all for what is to come at the end of it, is to make but lame work of the matter: you are intended for something

better, fair reader, than a mere toy for our sex; we, like children, get tired of toys after a little: and, if we find nothing better than a toy in you, are very apt to throw you aside and look for another: of all indignities put upon your sex, your education is the greatest; paint your outsides, and the work is done! What are duties and offices compared with the movement of the limbs and the management of the voice? If you can go out of a room well, it is no great matter how you go out of the world! To dance well is something, while you have got any such things as legs about you; it is something more to look what false steps you make, which must be brought to account when all your dancing days are over. Music is a fine thing when it comes to one's ear by law and by rule; but the accordance of the actions of life with the rule and law of religion and morality makes better harmony, let the music-masters say what

they will. But we must stop here—this subject, else, will run us too far.

In regard to Elsmere, he was a man that did mischief to a good cause. He had mistaken religion for an angel of wrath ; and, instead of growing more cheerful and merry the more religious he grew, came to live in this world like a man in a jail, that was condemned to be hanged as soon as he went out of it. Elsmere's intentions were good, too good, and they ran him into two faults : he was fain to make something out of human nature, for which the materials were not good enough, a thing without a fault, which were as good, as our merry brother historian once told him, as if a shoemaker should undertake to make a man out of Spanish leather, and fall at odds with himself every time he failed ; just as if the thing might be done. Elsmere had another fault, that of putting a hideous mask upon religion's face, and taking fright at it himself, like those severe

proscriptive writers that turn religion into a fury, brandishing a scourge, and spitting coals of fire, in order to bring men to fall in love with her. Such as these do more harm in their way, and that with the best intentions we will hope, than the profligate does in his; for let the profligate alone a little time, and the dreadful consequences of his own vices will preach a more prevailing sermon to the world than one of the fathers of the church could do. But these good folks—for they must needs be very good folks if they are themselves what they would fain make others—deter people from making any attempt to become religious at all, by throwing such impediments in the way as make the thing quite a hopeless matter: one might think, if the piety of their lives did not contradict it, that they were tempted by the devil to sap the very foundations of the church, and tumble church, religion, and every thing belonging to it, down in

one common ruin! What good can they expect will ever come by taking such pains, and laying out all their wit and genius, to make out religion to be a hard mistress? Can they think any good will come of telling lies of her? See what frowns and anger they put into her face; what a terrible sword they fix in her grasp; just as if wrath and fury, wounds and blood, were to be expected at her hands, rather than mercy, peace, and compassion. Now if these good folks are pleased to condemn nine-tenths of mankind to eternal damnation, religion hath nothing at all to do with that; but the mischief of it is, that they frighten folks out of the church and their wives. Such as read their works throw up matters in despair, and say, If all this must be done, which these writers command to be done, we shall give ourselves no further trouble about the thing; it comes much too near an impossibility to be what we ought to be, for such as we are

ever to be what we should be: our chance is for this world only, but in regard to heaven it is put far enough out of our reach.

Elsmere, however, as our merry brother historian used to say, was willing to make a long arm for it; he attempted impossibilities, to glorify the flesh and make himself perfect; threw himself into the midst of temptations, to prove that no fire could burn him, and other the like extravagancies, which answered one end indeed very well; it set folks a laughing at serious things. One of Elsmere's fellow-students, having heard that Elsmere was taking a great deal of pains to make an angel of himself, said to another that he would lay fifty guineas to five shillings that he never flew so far as a cock turkey.

Well, reader, of Elsmere and Rosa little more remains *at present* to be said. He, after having visited her father's neighbourhood in disguise, left it and

Rosa in high disgust, returned to Scotland, and buried himself alive amongst the fathers of the church. She, wild and distracted at his loss, suddenly disappeared, and nobody knew what became of her.

THE END.

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